

HOMOEOPATHY
AND
HYDROPATHY &c.

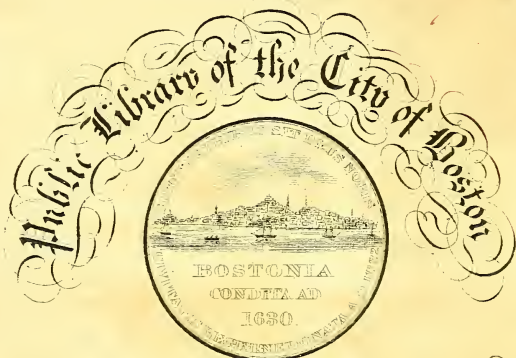
DR. LEE.

FOURTH EDITION RE ISSUED.

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REMARKS ON HOMŒOPATHY

BEING

A REJOINDER TO SOME REPLIES
FROM HOMŒOPATHS

ELICITED BY THE LETTER OF SIR B. BRODIE
TO "FRASER'S MAGAZINE."

HOMŒOPATHY

AND

HYDROPATHY

IMPARTIALLY APPRECIATED.

WITH

NOTES ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE INFLUENCE OF THE
MIND ON THE BODY.

BY

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Francis Abbott, M.D.

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PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

SOME years have elapsed since the former edition was published, the work having been long out of print. It is consequently now in great part rewritten ; and though not much exceeding its original limits, a good deal of additional matter has been introduced.

On perusing the publications emanating from the advocates of a particular remedy or mode of treatment, addressed to the general public through various advertising media, one can scarcely fail to be struck with the circumstance that the practice or remedy of which each treats, is all in all ; little or no account being taken by the writers of any other, and that with but few exceptions all the cases recorded in similar publications have a highly favorable termination ; no mention being made of failures, which, if inquiry could be instituted, would not unfrequently be found to outnumber the successes ; nor of only slight and partial ameliorations occurring in the condition of other patients, after, it may be, a long course of treatment. Hence, from not being found to answer

the exaggerated expectations raised respecting their almost universal efficacy, many remedies, calculated to render effectual service when employed in suitable cases, have fallen into unmerited neglect; while, on the other hand, others, having little or no intrinsic worth, have been consigned to deserved oblivion. To this disappointment is doubtless attributable the reaction which of late years has taken place in the public mind in France and Germany with respect to Homœopathy and Hydropathy; the former, as I have shown, being now but little practised in the chief seats of civilisation; and the hydropathic treatment having likewise become more circumscribed, though the employment of water in various ways is much more general than formerly in ordinary practice. The greater permanence of hydropathic establishments in this country—where a different mode of life and of medical practice prevails than on the Continent—would appear to be more assured; and there can be no doubt that the sojourn for a longer or shorter period in a well-conducted establishment, where climate and various hygienic appliances can be brought to bear with the best effect upon the system, is eminently calculated to rectify several disordered conditions of the economy, and sometimes to remove chronic ailments which have been found but little tractable to ordinary medication. Considerable discrimination is, however, required to enable the physician to determine as to the cases in which Hydropathy would be preferable to other remedial means.

ADDENDA TO THE RE-ISSUE.

THE practice of Homœopathy has of late years gone on declining in public estimation, the constant appeals for support to the Homœopathic Hospital being but scantily responded to ; and homœopathic practitioners, being less and less disposed to adhere to the principles enunciated by Hahnemann, now very frequently treat patients in a manner little differing from ordinary practice — which, it will readily be admitted, has been greatly modified from the system of active medication formerly too prevalent in chronic disease, and in this respect Homœopathy has been of service ;—but that the effects said to have been produced by the infinitesimal doses were, in the great majority of instances, owing to the power of the imagination, has now become pretty evident. A medical writer remarked on this head, a few years ago : “ It is not necessary to repeat the proofs which have been rendered so unequivocal, that substances allowed by the advocates themselves to be inert, when administered to patients who believed they were taking homœopathic remedies, produced the same effects as were ascribed to the infinitesimal doses of their potent medicines. The inference deducible from this fact is evaded with apparent force by a reference to the results of practice—the successful treatment of disease. Mental impressions have a great influence over the functions of the body, and faith is a powerful agent, which cannot be safely disregarded in the preservation or restoration of health. It may be averred that there never was a form of empiricism, however absurd, that met with any measure of credence or adoption, of which proofs of efficacy could not be adduced. We cannot but regard the infinitesimal doses and insignificant globules as a dangerous toy ; for, whilst they afford amusement to persons who are meddling as to their own health and officious as to the

management of health in other persons, they often occupy the only time when efficient remedies may prevail.

“The practice in question has undergone its examination; and could it, in passing the ordeal, have been ascertained to possess the elements of public utility, the men most competent to form accurate opinions would have generously endorsed it. We believe, however, that in no single instance has a medical practitioner, eminent for his knowledge of the human frame in its healthy and diseased condition, adopted the practice, and the medical literature has uniformly repudiated the practice as a great delusion.” *

Within the last few years the practice in the chief English hydropathic establishments has been very much modified, the drinking of cold water being now greatly circumscribed; the treatment (varied in individual cases) consisting mainly in the “pack” of the body, exclusive of the extremities, in wet towels and dry blankets for an hour or so, the tepid bath gradually cooled down to cold, with shower douche for two or three minutes, the rain douche upon all parts of the body, the falling douche (of a column of water), the sitz bath, and local wet compresses. When perspiration is required previous to the application of the cold shower, or douche, it is produced by the agency of warm air, by means of a spirit-lamp. The cases to which Hydropathy is applicable are now better discriminated than formerly.

ST. LEONARDS, *November*, 1866.

* “Mind and the Emotions,” by Wm. Cooke, M.D. (Longmans and Co.) The reviewer of a recent pamphlet (“True and False Sciences”) on Homœopathy, in the last number of the *Westminster Review* (Oct., 1866), remarks: “The author has laid bare the hollow pretensions and shallow sophistry of Homœopathy. Were the question one in which evidence had any weight, or argument availed aught, there could be no further ground of dispute; but credulity has never shown itself affected by argument, and a system which rests on no principle but the principle that there are many people always ready to be deceived by a boldly-sustained imposture, and which has no rule of practice really adhered to by its disciples, is not likely to suffer much from the most logical demonstration of its falseness.”

HOMŒOPATHY.

“ Quand l'absurde est outré, on lui fait trop d'honneur,
De vouloir, par raison, combattre son erreur.”

LA FONTAINE.

THIS doctrine was first promulgated about fifty years ago, though it did not at first attract much attention. Its originator, Hahnemann, was a native of Saxony, who was brought up to the medical profession; and as it would appear, failing in his attempts to obtain practice in various parts of Germany, at length took up his abode in Leipsic, where he made experiments, upon himself and other healthy persons, upon the action of medicinal substances, in order to ascertain the particular symptoms to which each would give rise. Having in 1790 taken some Peruvian bark, it occasioned, as he states, fits of ague, and he was struck with the circumstance that the substance specially employed for curing intermittent fever should produce a similar affection in a healthy person. This led him to infer that substances which produce certain symptoms in healthy individuals are the best calculated to remove analogous symptoms when induced by other causes. Hence he deduced the fundamental axiom of his doctrine,

that diseases are curable by substances which have the power of causing similar diseases in healthy persons. *Similia similibus curantur*.*

The only division of diseases by Hahnemann is into acute and chronic; of the former, comparatively little is said in his "Exposition." Although he admits that they may arise from various occasional causes, as cold, excesses, &c.; yet, in many cases, he says, they depend upon a psoric affection; and almost all chronic diseases originate from sycosis, syphilis, or psora (*vulgo* itch). This latter especially is the cause of innumerable diseases, which great truth it took Hahnemann twelve years to find out. "This," he adds, "is the only fundamental and exciting cause of all the morbid forms which, under the names of nervous weakness, hysteria, hypochondriasis, mania, melancholia, epilepsy, spasms of all kinds, rickets, caries, cancer, gout, hemorrhoids, jaundice, dropsy, amenorrhœa, hæmoptysis, asthma, and suppuration of the lungs, sterility, deafness, cataract, and amaurosis, gravel, palsy, pains of all kinds, &c., figure in pathology as so many separate diseases distinct and independent of each other.

* About the year 1800, Hahnemann advertised a new salt, of which he claimed the discovery, and sold at the modest price of a *louis d'or* per ounce. The Society for the Promotion of Natural Science had it analysed by an experienced chemist, who pronounced it to be common borax. He soon afterwards advertised an infallible preventive of scarlet fever; but being disappointed in its sale, he afterwards confessed that it was only a few grains of belladonna dissolved in water.—"Remarks on the Abracadabra of the Nineteenth Century," by Dr. Wolf.

“The modifications this miasm has undergone, in its passage through millions of human constitutions during several hundred generations, explain how it can assume so many forms.”*

Medical doctrines are divided by Hahnemann into the allopathic, or method in general use, of curing diseases by remedies of an opposite nature—*contraria contrariis*; the antipathic, or palliative method; and the homœopathic, the only true method; the principles of which are contained in his “*Organon, ou Exposition de la Doctrine Médicale Homœopathique*.” This work contains an abundance of absurd reasoning, of extravagant and unfounded assertions; of some truisms, from which erroneous conclusions are drawn; of exceptions to general principles and isolated examples, extracted from various works, and adduced as the principles themselves, in order to corroborate the positions laid down by the author. Thus, to prove that many of the cures hitherto effected have been so by the chance employment of homœopathic means, several instances are brought forward, among which are, that rose-water cures ophthalmia, only because it has the power of causing a kind of ophthalmia. In like manner bark cures intermittents, because it occasions these diseases; ipecacuanha arrests fluxions of blood, only because it

* It is scarcely necessary to call to mind that many patients, while actually labouring under the itch, are in robust bodily health. The homœopaths of the present day have repudiated this and one or two others of the more absurd dogmas of the founder of the system.

possesses the faculty of exciting hæmorrhage; generous wines, in small doses, cure homœopathically inflammatory fever; hyoscyamus could not cure spasms resembling epilepsy, if it had not the power of exciting convulsions; the same remedy could not have cured a case of mania from jealousy, if it did not occasion mania and jealousy in healthy individuals.

Again, the popular customs of using snow to frost-bitten parts, of putting a scalded hand near the fire, are adduced to prove the homœopathic nature of the remedies to these accidents; vaccine is considered to act homœopathically in preventing small-pox, &c. These examples will suffice to show that the style of argument adopted is opposed to established truths; for who ever heard of rose-water causing ophthalmy, of bark causing intermittents, of ipecacuanha exciting hæmorrhage, or being employed to arrest it, of generous wines curing inflammatory fever, of hyoscyamus determining convulsions, mania, and jealousy? If snow is used to frost-bitten parts, it is used with friction, in order, as is well known, to bring the parts gradually to their natural state; whereas, if used on homœopathic principles, it would be kept constantly applied; and, as may be imagined, with a certainty of aggravating the evil. So also with respect to the application of heat to scalded parts; and to prove vaccine a homœopathic agent, it should be shown that it has the power to cure small-pox when already existing; which, indeed, it is asserted it would do, were it not surpassed by

the small-pox in intensity ; and also that it would produce its effects when employed in the millionth or billionth dilution.

Homœopathists do not consider a knowledge of anatomy, physiology, or pathology, to be necessary for contributing to the cure of disease ; but they restrict themselves to noting the different symptoms present in any given case, and to ascertaining the appropriate remedy for such symptoms without regard to the organic changes or other circumstances by which they may have been induced. Thus, by strictly following the rules of homœopathy, if a patient have headache, whether arising from exhaustion, febrile or inflammatory action, or stomach disorder, the same remedy may be had recourse to, and this should be a substance capable of causing headache in healthy persons.

Homœopathic medicines are, moreover, not considered by strict homœopathists as direct means for the removal or alleviation of disease, but as acting by giving rise to symptoms surpassing in intensity those of the disease against which they are employed, on the principle that two similar diseases cannot co-exist in the same individual ; the original disease, being overpowered by the disease artificially induced, consequently yields, and, on the discontinuance of the remedies, is in its turn speedily overcome by the restorative powers of the constitution. Respecting this proposition, which also contradicts itself, Dr. Wolf asks, “ How can it be reconciled with common sense, that the vital powers are too weak and insufficient to remove

any natural disease or its symptoms, be they ever so trifling, without the aid of an homœopathic drug, but are nevertheless powerful enough to remove the drug sickness which is left after the natural disease is extinguished? Can any one comprehend that a power shall be capable of overcoming a great obstacle, while it would be incapable of removing a similar and much smaller one?"

According to the Hahnemannian doctrine, the effects of medicinal substances are two-fold, viz., primitive, as the violent action produced by large quantities of certain drugs; purgation, sweating, &c.; and secondary, or homœopathic, in which the action is determined towards the diseased part; the active properties becoming more developed in proportion to the minuteness of the dose; in fact, homœopaths are cautioned against too minute a subdivision of the medicine, lest it should become so energetic as to give rise to dangerous symptoms.* I cannot, however, do better than extract one or two passages from the "Exposition," in order to illustrate this position:—

"Besides, the homœopathic medicament acquires, at each division or dilution, an extraordinary degree of power by the friction or the shock imparted to it, as a means of developing the inherent

* "A proper infinitesimal homœopathic dose can and ought, in the whole spirit of Hahnemann's exposition and experience, to have no such active effect as the production of diaphoresis or other evacuation. Yet, we constantly hear of these effects as being produced by globules."—"Homœopathy, its Tenets and Tendencies," by Professor Simpson.

virtues of medicines unknown before me, and which is so energetic, that of late, experience has obliged me to *shake the mixture only twice*, whereas formerly I prescribed ten shakes to each dilution."

"Gold, silver, platina, charcoal, are without action on man in their ordinary state; but from the continued trituration of a grain of gold with a hundred grains of powdered sugar, there results a preparation which has already great medicinal virtues. If a grain of this mixture be taken and triturated with another hundred grains of sugar, and if this process be continued until each grain of the ultimate preparation contains a quadrillionth part of the grain of gold, we shall then have a medicament in which the medicinal virtue of the gold is so much developed, that it will be sufficient to take a grain, place it in a phial, and *cause the air from it to be breathed for a few instants* by a melancholy individual, in whom the disgust of life is carried so far as to incline to suicide, in order that, an hour afterwards, this person be delivered from his evil demon, and restored to his taste for life."*

* Dr. Balfour, in his report of Homœopathy in Vienna (in the *British and Foreign Medical Review*, October, 1846), says: "One practitioner often contents himself with allowing the patient to smell the remedy, *waiting patiently for some weeks or so for the completion of the cure*, not even permitting a second smell."

Hahnemann sometimes made patients smell a *dried decillionth* globule, and sometimes by dissolving a globule or two in water and spirits, and making the patient hold his nose over the surface of the solution. It is easy to estimate the value or valuelessness of such a dose; it may be more difficult to estimate the *pecuniary*

Hahnemann also says, speaking of silex or flint : “This earth being reduced to a millionth degree of attenuation, a grain of the powder is to be reduced to the decillionth dilution. In fact, dilutions to the billionth or trillionth degree produce effects much too violent ; that of the sextillionth degree may be commenced with, but this only suits robust persons ; in irritable subjects it is prudent to use only the decillionth dilution.”

Of kitchen salt, he says : “A grain of salt is reduced to the millionth degree of attenuation ; this powder is to be dissolved in diluted alcohol, and the division extended to the decillionth degree : carried to this degree of dilution, sea-salt is a powerful and heroical medicament, which can only be administered to patients with the greatest caution.” *

“We find homœopathy,” says Sir J. Forbes with reference to the last position, “maintaining that substances utterly powerless in a state of sensible bulk, can acquire astonishing power by mere subdivision. Can any proposition be submitted to human apprehension that seems more utterly improbable, more ludicrously absurd ? To be

value of the prescription. The editor of the *Pharmaceutical Journal* says : “We have heard of a lady who, having been subjected to this process, passed the fee before the doctor’s nose, and then—replaced it in her pocket.”—Simpson, *Op. Cit.*

* According to Jahr, 450 symptoms are produced by common salt, among which he enumerates “numerous flaws in the nails, redness of the great toe, corns in the feet.” Chalk is said to produce above 1,000 symptoms, and an “inclination to pull people’s noses” is set down as one of the symptoms produced by mercury.

called on to believe that the decillionth of a grain of charcoal or oyster-shell is capable of producing hundreds of the most formidable symptoms, of curing, as by magic, the most inveterate diseases, while we might take ounces of the very same substance with no other inconvenience than from its bulk, seems so gratuitous an outrage to human reason, that the mind instinctively revolts from the proposition.”*

The action of imponderable agents, as light, electricity, &c., has been adduced by some homœopathists to prove the action of infinitesimal doses of medicines; but it is evident that no similar comparison can be instituted; and in order for the analogy to be maintained, it should have been proved by the homœopathists, that persons can see better in proportion to the small quantity of light, and that they are more affected by heat or electricity in proportion to the smallness of the quantity of these agents applied.

Hahnemann says, “Let mathematicians explain to them how true it is, that if a substance be divided into any number of parts, its smallest particle will always contain something of this substance, and therefore it can never become a nonentity.” On which Dr. Wolf remarks: “If this be admitted in a strict sense, does it follow, therefore, that the effect of these substances on the human body in any imaginable small quantity, must not only be perceptible, but still greater than when in quantities many million times larger? The

* “Homœopathy, Allopathy, and Young Physic.”

thick fibres of a piece of meat are divisible into those which are so small as to be perceptible only by the best microscope. Does it follow from this, that the decoction of such a microscopic fibre will afford the patient as much or even more nourishment after a homœopathic manipulation, than a strong broth made allopathically from some pounds of meat? ” *

Persons who unhesitatingly place faith in the action of the infinitesimal doses, do not really know what proportion of the drug is implied by the various dilutions said to exist in homœopathic preparations. “What, in fact, is a billionth part of a grain?” asks Professor Simpson. “Why, if our common parent Adam, when called into existence 6,000 years ago, had then began swallowing a billionth of a grain of sulphur every second, and if he had been permitted to live up to the present time, swallowing night and day sixty billionths every minute, he would, as yet, have completed only a small part of his task. It would require him to swallow at the same rate for 26,000 years to come, in order to finish one single grain of a drug which has little effect on his descendants in doses of twenty-five or fifty grains.

“When they speak of the decillionth of a grain, they seem little to reckon on what a decillionth amounts to. The world is computed to contain some 900,000,000 of human beings: if all these had lived during the past 6,000 years, and each of them had swallowed, every moment of their ex-

istence, a decillionth of a grain, they would not, during the 6,000 years, have finished one single grain.*

“Perhaps, however, in no point in relation to their doctrine of infinitesimal doses do the homœopathists show more true weakness and less pre-calculation than in admitting similar therapeutic properties, and similar medical success and experience from the same drugs when used in different dilutions. According to their printed records of cases and observations, cures by the same drug are effected, and, if we may believe these records, by equal speed and success by some practitioners when using it in the 1st or 3rd dilution, by others in the 30th dilution, by others again when using it in the 100th, 1,000th, or 6,000th dilution. In admitting, however, a similar effect to the 3rd and 30th dilutions (not to go higher) of the same medicine, the whole question of the power of infinitesimal doses is in one sense abandoned; for if this 30th dilution succeeds as well as the 3rd dilution of a grain of the drug, it is very plain that neither can have any effect at all. ‘There are, however,’ long ago observed Arnaud, ‘no absurdities too groundless to find supporters. Whoever determines to deceive the world, may be sure of finding people who are willing enough to be deceived, and the most absurd follies always find minds to which they are adapted.’ ”†

* “Homœopathy, its Tenets and Tendencies.”

† A single grain at even the fourth or fifth dilution would, of course, be sufficient, during one druggist’s life-time, for a whole universe.

As a proof that all homœopathic globules act alike, the following instance is recorded. An old school mate of his having began business as an homœopathic druggist in Liverpool, sent Dr. Simpson a present of a small box of homœopathic medicines, which he gave as a plaything to his child, who used in his sport to smash the bottles, empty their globules in a heap, and then re-fill the bottles from the general mass. A professional brother calling one day on him during his absence, took the box, and, on meeting him many weeks afterwards, told him that he had been trying to practise homœopathy; adding, that he had seen some wonderful effects and cures from using the drugs contained in Dr. Simpson's once former homœopathic box.

Homœopathic remedies may in point of fact be considered generally analogous with those of the *médecine expectante*, with this difference, that in the latter the patients know that the physician employs no active medicines, but trusts entirely to the efforts of nature for their cure; whereas the imagination of patients treated homœopathically is acted upon, from their being led to consider the remedies employed to be of an energetic nature, as will be seen in the sequel. The cures so pompously announced by the homœopathists, will in

A homœopathic apothecary's stock in trade could not consequently exceed a few shillings or pounds at most, and need not require renewal during the longest life-time; and yet these same homœopathic dilutions seem convertible, through an adequate amount of credulity on the part of the public, into annual incomes for three (in Edinburgh) thriving homœopathic establishments.—*Ibid.*

almost all cases be found to be simple recoveries after a longer or shorter period, as in the following, published by a homœopathic physician :—

“ Madame C. V., aged thirty-six, affected with chronic gastro-enteritis, *produced by grief and abuse of coffee* : she had been treated by several physicians, and had been kept for three months on a milk diet ; she had headaches, and menstruation had been suppressed seven months ; she was prescribed pulsatilla, nux vomica, &c. ; menstruation appeared in twenty-seven days, and in *three months* she was cured.”

“ Mademoiselle R. did not menstruate at her accustomed period, and was affected with a catarrh ; she was prescribed pulsatilla ; menstruation occurred in the following month, and the catarrh was cured without any other medicament.”

“ All the results,” says a German author, “ which have been obtained by the employment of medicines in homœopathic doses, were founded, without exception, upon delusion, and were not in consequence of these means. If any one wishes to convince himself of the truth of this, he need only so administer these doses, that the persons are not aware that they have taken anything, and every physician would then see as little effect from them as I have seen after innumerable experiments. These infinitesimal powders, drops, and globules, are in fact nothing more than the modernised moonstone of the ancient Phœnicians and Carthaginians. At that time, as at the present day, faith in them must produce a blind confidence,

and if this be effected, it would not matter whether they were swallowed, or hung about the neck, or carried in the pocket as an amulet—the effect would be the same.*

“When homœopathic physicians and patients assert that they have seen on themselves and others the most evident effects from these means, we must draw our inferences from the consideration of the particular proceeding which is accustomed to be followed. Every change which occurs in the organism, after having taken an homœopathic dose, would be considered as the necessary consequence of it. Hence, minute attention is always more or less directed to the functions of the body, but this would give rise to a variety of symptoms even in very healthy persons, who would otherwise have experienced nothing. Any one who has a tolerably lively imagination, may make the experiment on himself. If I were to tell an excitable patient he must attentively observe the pulsation of his heart and arteries, I may reckon to a certainty that at my next visit I shall have to hear an account of the surprising symptoms which have been observed respecting the heart’s action.”† “And Hahnemann,” says Dr. Simpson,

* “If the homœopathic physician,” says Dr. Madden, of Brighton, “possesses even an ordinary amount of penetration, he will soon perceive that the remedies which are chosen nevertheless fail to effect a cure unless great attention be paid to hygienic regimen and external means. The homœopathist must, therefore, after a few years, have his attention almost exclusively directed to hygiene.”—On Homœopathy, 1846.

† “*Psychische Heilmittel*,” by Dr. Braünlich.

“in all probability, took symptoms of ague when he first experimentally used the cinchona bark, because he expected, if not actually desired, them to occur. Many of his ‘provings’ of drugs were made on himself and his disciples; and his countryman, Isensee, avers that Hahnemann’s alleged symptoms may all be referred to sobriety, fasting, ill-humour, and sleepiness, caused by continual attention to *nothing*, mixed with those innumerable sensations which crowd every hour of our life.”

Alluding to the different medical theories which at various times have had their day, and after a longer or shorter period have sunk into oblivion, the same author observes: “Each system found its believers and adherents, the number of whom at first greatly increased, and then gradually diminished. The falling off usually took place when the charm of novelty had subsided. In proportion as the system ceased to be new, was the belief lessened in its infallibility, which was generally at first loudly cried up by the proposers, and the number of fortunate cures decreased in the same proportion, until the whole fabric of the system was carried away in the stream of time, frequently leaving behind scarcely a trace of it in the history of medicine. With the non-medical public, the difficulty of distinguishing what is a cure by nature alone, and what is a cure by nature assisted and controlled by art, makes up the sum of the difficulty of distinguishing between true and spurious medical treatment. It is far too frequently forgotten, that men labouring under

disease, even the most acute, do not, as a general rule, die, even when totally and entirely left without any medical treatment whatever." "Nothing is more common," says Archbishop Whately (on Logic), "than to hear a person state confidently, as from his own experience, that such and such a patient was cured by this or that medicine, whereas all he absolutely knows is, that he took the medicine, and that he recovered."*

"The importance of any pretended remedy for disease," remarks a writer in the *Medical Gazette*, "exerts its influence on that great majority of the public who are necessarily incapable of judging of medical evidence, because they are ignorant of the extraordinary workings of the human mind, which exhibit themselves to medical men only, not in unhealthy individuals alone, but often in those who are apparently free from disease. Experienced medical men are alone capable of

* "Many a lady Hahnemann practitioner," adds Dr. Simpson, "has, however, her own experience to adduce. But let us listen for a moment to what homœopathic medical practitioners themselves think of this so-called experience. Alluding to amateur Hahnemannic doctors, male and female, Dr. Madden, of Brighton, thus spoke of their credulity and their cures at a dinner (*in vino veritas*) of the Homœopathic Society: 'Oh, the wonders they daily heard of as effected by amateur practitioners!' and what were these in the vast majority of cases—simply natural recoveries, *in which the all potent globules took no share*. Such boasting did infinite injury; it might for a time convince the public, but the profession saw through these flimsy triumphs, and at once concluded that all these cases belonged to the same class."—Reported in Vol. V. of the *British Journal of Homœopathy*, 1851.

ascertaining the existence or non-existence of disease amongst the variety and complexity of symptoms which distinguish particular affections; and they alone can say with certainty, whether disease has actually existed, or, if so, whether it is or is not actually cured by the remedy alleged to have removed it. For there is a strong inclination in mankind generally to assist in propagating an imposition to which they have themselves yielded, both because it makes them objects of interest to the public, and because it appears to justify them in having given it their confidence. Again, there are many cases where the complaint has existed only in the *imagination* of the patient, and in these it will be no matter of wonder if the homœopathic globule in aid of said imagination should effect a cure. In chronic stomach disorders, also, many patients have recovered under an homœopathic doctor, and thus been the means of exalting his fame, whereas it would be easy to show, that such patients needed only cautious diet, time, the abandonment of a habit of taking too much aperient medicine, and the observance of regular rules, to effect a cure—all of which even an *old-fashioned* doctor would, of course, have directed.

“A gentleman who had been out of health some time, and had paid but little attention to the direction of his medical attendant, was advised to consult an homœopathic physician; he did so, and remained under his care six weeks, the doctor making his visit as often as he pleased; he improved in health—in short, was cured. ‘Now,’

exclaimed his friend, 'you henceforth stand up in defence of homœopathy.' 'Not at all; I am more than ever convinced of its fallacy and humbug. I have followed the plan of diet, &c., which plan was often urged upon me by my former medical friend, but not one of the billionth powders or globules have I taken.'

"A gentleman had been for some time subject to acute inflammation of the membrana conjunctiva, and had been attended by a surgeon of great eminence in the metropolis, who on every occasion had succeeded in subduing it. On a recurrence of the complaint, by the *judicious advice* of friends, he was placed under the care of an homœopathic practitioner, when, after being for *six weeks shut up in a dark room, great attention being paid to his diet and manner of living*, he was cured again by the *wonderful effects of the homœopathic remedies!!!* This, of course, stamped the faith of the family, and all became disciples of Hahnemann. Some time after, one of its members was found in a fit, and the doctor was sent for. What plan did he adopt? He belonging to a school which professes to repudiate blood-letting as pernicious, and almost certainly fatal, himself immediately bled her, and that not in an homœopathic quantity, but largely. She continued under his care for a few days, but not recovering, she was by the doctor's own desire sent into the country in this state, and handed over to her original medical attendant, who discovered, and was confirmed in his opinion by an eminent physician, that she had been suf-

fering from epilepsy, arising from the overloaded state of her stomach and bowels. The results, of course, effected the *moral* cure of the whole family.

“I give you now a case of the mischief that may arise from adopting this *harmless* system. A lady of rank had occasional headaches, for which she was advised to consult an homœopathic physician. She had for many years taken daily aperient medicine, but nevertheless enjoyed a very good state of health. Her old medical attendants were summoned to her assistance after about the expiration of twelve months of homœopathic treatment. They found her labouring under congestion of the liver to an enormous extent, constipated bowels, and active peritoneal inflammation, all of which had existed for some days, and had not ‘yielded to the means employed’ by the homœopathist; he by whose treatment these formidable symptoms had been induced, willingly sneaked out of the responsibility. True, her life was saved, but she has never enjoyed her former good health.

“The art of detecting and distinguishing diseases under innumerable phases is, in fact, the foundation of the art of medicine, for when a disease is at once surely ascertained and detected, it is comparatively easy to find its proper remedy, and to cure it, if it is in its nature curable. The public make no such inquiries, but hearing that a case has been cured by an unusual remedy—brandy and salt or mustard-seed, for instance—

they immediately infer that these remedies, if applied by a certain individual, will cure every disease; and, therefore, this individual, whether young or old, male or female, learned or unlearned, is the person to be consulted, and is preferred to those who have devoted the best portion of their lives to the study of their profession."

On looking over the history of several of the cases treated at the London Homœopathic Institution, I found what might be anticipated, that they were very analogous to the above—viz., the ordinary slighter ailments usually met with in dispensary practice, which seldom require a long treatment, though most of the cases reported in the Homœopathic Annals required two, three, or four months' attendance, before the patients were dismissed; and though the different globules prescribed are minutely stated, no mention is made of the attention to diet and regimen, the necessity of which is doubtless inculcated upon the patients, thus leaving it to be inferred that the recoveries take place from the globules—*post hoc ergo propter hoc*.*

Notwithstanding the numerous impartial statements of the results of the homœopathic practice, we find Sir John Forbes speaking in its favour in his

* A homœopathic writer admitted many years ago that "homœopathic practitioners have hitherto been extremely prone to look out for the wonderful as regards the action of their remedies, and never fail upon the *post hoc propter hoc* principle to refer every amelioration to the beneficial influence of their prescriptions."—"A Practical View of Homœopathy," by Stephen Simpson, M.D.

recent work. "We have surely a most powerful argument," he says, "in favour of the admission that an average amount of recoveries take place under this system of treatment, in the fact that no public outcry has been raised against it on the score of inefficiency, and yet more, of greater mortality. If it were really true that a marked greater amount of lingering cases, and especially of deaths, took place under this new treatment, surely the important fact would have been discovered ere this time in a field of treatment now so wide and watched over by so alert an army of critics on every side. But I venture to say that this has not been the case. I maintain," he adds, "in the common and obvious evidence admitted in such cases, a sufficiently large number of cases get well under this system of treatment to prevent the existence of any striking contrast in the public eye between its practical effects and those of the ordinary system."*

We have had, I think, sufficient proof that disorders and diseases are of much longer duration under the homœopathic than under appropriate allopathic treatment; and also that in acute and serious diseases the mortality of patients homœopathically treated greatly exceeds that of those treated by the ordinary approved means. It must, moreover, be remembered, in instituting a comparison between the two methods, that the proportion of patients who have recourse to homœopathy when attacked by severe illness is comparatively

* "On Nature and Art in the Cure of Disease."

small; that a great majority of homœopathic cases would terminate after a longer or shorter time in recovery; and that but few would have a fatal termination if left to themselves without any treatment. "It is evident," says a transatlantic author, "that homœopathy is subject to no such testing as allopathy is. It does not ordinarily have to grapple with cases of every variety and of every degree of severity. Indeed, it is very common for families, while they trust to homœopathy in all mild cases, to reserve to themselves the right to fall back upon allopathy and allopathic physicians whenever the disease assumes at all a grave aspect; and I cannot forbear remarking that such families sometimes find, to their sorrow, that they have relied upon the tiny doses too long."*

Homœopathists have adduced, with much assumption and affectation of candour, the results of the statistics of their Viennese institutions, in proof of the superiority of the practice. I will, however, proceed to show, from undeniable testimony, how little these are to be relied upon. "The value of statistics," says the above-quoted American writer, "especially when they relate to therapeutics, depend on the principles on which they are collected, and the mental and moral character of him who collects them. These statistics, it is to be observed, are, for the most part at least, bare statistics, unaccompanied with any details of cases. They are made by men com-

* Hooker on Homœopathy.

mitted to a theory and a system of practice, and who show, by their provings and their records of cases, that they cannot be relied upon as accurate observers. They proclaim, too, their statistics too much in the advertising style of quackery, and then sometimes even the published statements of homœopathic physicians have proved to be false.”*

Many years ago I visited the homœopathic hospital at Leipsic, which had been much talked of, and was directed to a small house in the suburbs, containing only eight beds, of which but one was occupied, and that by a phthisical patient for several months without any amelioration. There were, however, five other patients able to get about—viz., a case of chronic swelling in the foot; one of delirium tremens, which had also been a long time under treatment by arnica and hyoscyamus in doses of the decillionth part of a grain; a young girl with deranged menstruation, who had also been some months in the house; a case of necrosis of the tibiæ, treated by the internal exhibition of homœopathic remedies; and a woman

* “At a meeting, in London, of the Homœopathic Medical Society, Mr. Cameron, a homœopathic practitioner, with rare honesty, told his colleagues that he thought we (homœopaths) gained little by constantly trumpeting forth our extraordinary cures and concealing our failures.”—*Journal of Homœopathy*, Vol. V., p. 389.

“We have been informed of an instance in which, towards the commencement of the last cholera epidemic in Scotland, a disciple of Hahnemann declared that he had cured above seventy cases of the disease in a community where not fifty cases in all had as yet occurred to the two or three hundred physicians practising there.”—*Professor Simpson, Op. Cit.*

with a cutaneous syphilitic disease, who had been treated by homœopathic remedies for several months, with apparently but little advantage, as the disease seemed to me to be interminable under a similar system.

The house physician, having become convinced, after a residence of several months in the house, of the inefficiency and danger of the homœopathic practice, subsequently gave up the appointment, and published an exposition of the system pursued, with an account of the cases, clearly showing that the so-called cures were recoveries from common ailments by the efforts of nature, the cases being frequently a long time under treatment; whereas, by suitable medication and attention at the outset, they would, in most instances, have been cured in a few days; and also that many of the more serious cases got worse for the want of efficient treatment.* On a subsequent visit to Leipsic I found that matters had been going on but indifferently with homœopathy, the hospital having been turned into a dispensary. It has for several years been altogether closed.

An animated controversy was carried on some years ago at Leipsic. Professor Back, in a letter to homœopaths at home and abroad, proposed to determine whether the fundamental principle on which homœopathy is founded (*similia similibus*) be really just and true. "The undersigned," he adds, "now maintains, what is likewise certainly supported by experi-

* "Über die Nichtigkeit der Homœopathie." Leipsic, 1841.

ments, that not a single homœopathic remedy is *capable of inducing in a healthy body* those morbid symptoms for which it is recommended. I gave to a number of women," he further adds, "a drop of the third dilution of jalap, assuring them that certain sensations in the head would arise." These sensations did arise; but cold and diarrhœa, which, according to "Muller's Domestic Medicine," is of constant occurrence, did not supervene. He asks "why most homœopathists prescribe homœopathic remedies, not in homœopathic, but in large allopathic doses, when they wish to obtain a real action? How it is that homœopathists inquire of their patient whether they will be treated homœopathically or allopathically? How any person, well acquainted with physiological medicine, never becomes a homœopathist? How, after the action of a poison, homœopathists do not administer the same drug in a homœopathic dose, instead of an allopathic remedy? Thus, in salivation from mercury, mercury is not recommended, but iodine, sulphur, or nitric acid. In cases of poisoning, allopathic antidotes are given. How the homœopathic treatment is easily learnt by old women and by agriculturists as respects diseases of animals?"

The absurdity of a doctrine, equally opposed to reason and to every-day experience, could not fail to be immediately apparent to the medical profession, as well as the injurious effects that would arise from its professors being allowed to practise on the credulity of the public, a large proportion of whom are always attracted by novelty, especially

if it be clothed in the garb of unintelligibility and mystery. Accordingly, some years after its promulgation, in order to render apparent the value to be attached to the pretensions of homœopathy, experiments were made in Germany, Russia, France, and Italy, by treating a certain number of patients in public institutions by homœopathic means, and an equal number by the usual methods: the results are such as might have been anticipated, fully confirming those observed in the Leipsic and London homœopathic institutions.

A German homœopathist, practising in Russia, was invested by the Grand-Duke Michael with full powers to prove, if possible, by a comparison of facts, the advantages of homœopathic measures over the ordinary modes of treatment; and a certain number of patients in the wards of a military hospital were entrusted to his care. At the expiration of two months, however, he was not permitted to proceed further; for, on comparing results, it was seen that within this period, out of four hundred and fifty-seven patients treated by the ordinary means, three hundred and sixty-four, or three-fourths, were cured, and none died; whereas, by the homœopathic method, tried on one hundred and twenty-eight patients, one-half only were cured, and five had died.

In order to ascertain and give publicity to the results, the Russian Government caused a certain number of patients to be treated homœopathically in one hospital, while in another an equal number of patients were merely subjected to regulated diet

and appropriate regimen, without the exhibition of any medicine. The results were very similar in both instances, and the medical council appointed to superintend the experiments thus gives its official opinion :—

“The medical council, after having attentively weighed the results of the experiments made according to the homœopathic method, and compared them with those made according to the principles of the *médecine expectante*, finds that they greatly resemble the latter, and are probably based only on the *vis medicatrix naturæ*; for the infinitely minute doses can produce no effect on the human body. The medical council is therefore of opinion, that the homœopathic practice should be prohibited in sanatory establishments dependent on Government, for the following reasons :—

“1. Acute diseases require energetic means of treatment, which are not to be expected from homœopathy.

“2. The homœopathic treatment of external lesions and surgical diseases is altogether out of the question.

“3. Some slight affections get well while under homœopathic treatment, but similar affections disappear equally well, without any medical treatment, by the adoption of an appropriate regimen, good air, and cleanliness.”

The homœopathist who introduced the practice at Naples was, as stated by Dr. Wolf, “an ignorant Bohemian barber, who enjoyed the patronage of the Austrian General, to whom he was particularly

recommended by Hahnemann. The public, as well as some talented young physicians who adopted homœopathy, awoke from their illusive credulity, but not until the General, with many other persons of distinguished rank, had died or were injured by this all-curing art."

At the time homœopathy was in vogue at Naples, a commission was appointed, by Royal order, to superintend the treatment of a certain number of patients during forty days; the patients were selected by the physicians, and a separate ward in the hospital was appropriated to them.

It was first determined by the commissioners to ascertain whether some of the patients would not get well without the employment of any remedy; ten were consequently set apart, and all recovered. One of them had a gastric fever; the homœopathic physician wished to give him a drop of the tincture of St. Ignatius's bean, at the twelfth dilution, representing a quadrillionth part of the original drop. He protested against waiting, saying, that the delay might compromise the life of the patient. The physicians re-assured him; they reckoned upon a crisis occurring, which accordingly did take place in the night, and the patient was well in two days. Had the homœopathic dose been taken, the cure would most assuredly have been attributed to it.

Several slight affections were treated homœopathically, and recovered, without the commissioners being able to ascribe any of the recoveries to homœopathy, as they would in all probability

have recovered as soon by simple attention to diet. A third set of cases of a more serious nature, and requiring the assistance of medicine, were also treated by the homœopathic method, which was found altogether powerless, none of them obtaining any advantage; the cases were longer under treatment than usual, and several of the patients became worse, requiring the employment of ordinary measures for their cure.

In a fourth series of experiments of homœopathic remedies on healthy persons, no effects resulted from their administration. From these facts, the commissioners deduced the following inferences: 1st, That the homœopathic treatment produced no effect; and 2ndly, that it had the serious inconvenience, in several of the patients, of preventing the employment of remedies by which they might be cured.*

On account of the statement of a Dr. Luz, a veterinary surgeon at Leipsic, that he had performed several surprising cures by the homœopathic method on horses and dogs, trials were instituted on these animals in the veterinary school and hospital at Berlin. The experiments were conducted with the utmost exactness, and in the presence of many students and homœopathists;

* A laboured attempt was made in a recent Number of the *Quarterly Journal of Homœopathy* to disprove this report of the Neapolitan Commission. The essential facts are, however, as stated; the commissioners having, after investigation, issued the above condemnation of homœopathy, notwithstanding it enjoyed Royal and other high patronage.

and though the cases were similar to those described by Dr. Luz, not one was cured, not one confirmed his statements even in the slightest degree.

The experiments made in Paris to show how far homœopathy had claims to public confidence, also tend to prove that where any effects are induced by globules, they are mainly to be ascribed to the influence of the imagination.

First. Several medical students of the Hôtel Dieu, chosen by a homœopathic physician, were subjected to the homœopathic regimen, and took at first one, then two, then ten, and at last eighty globules at a dose, of the most active medicines prepared by the only homœopathic chemist in Paris. In not one instance was the slightest effect produced.

Secondly. A number of pills made with inert substances, as flour, gum arabic, and starch, were given to patients who believed them to be homœopathic remedies. I subjoin two or three of the results obtained :—

Aphonia, of six weeks' duration, cured in a few hours by starch pills *given homœopathically*. A girl, aged twenty, was admitted on the 14th of January with complete loss of voice, which had existed since the middle of November. She had experienced a similar attack in the preceding year, but had recovered in fifteen days. Menstruation was regularly performed. A few days' rest, and the usual hospital regimen, produced no effect; she was consequently placed in the department where

the homœopathic experiments were made, and was ordered two starch pills; the first to be taken in the presence of the physician, the next when four hours had elapsed. A few minutes after the first pill had been swallowed, the following symptoms manifested themselves—anxiety, pain, and uneasiness in the region of the heart and thorax, perspiration, with heat and eruption on the skin. The second pill appeared to aggravate these symptoms, with the addition of hiccough. She afterwards fell asleep, and, on awaking, was astonished to find she could talk in a loud tone. The complaint did not recur, and she soon quitted the hospital.

A man, aged forty, was admitted about the same time as the preceding patient, complaining of sense of oppression on the chest. He had experienced an attack of hæmoptysis a year before, and was exceedingly hypochondriacal. During the first few days no treatment was adopted, and he continued in the same state. Four starch pills, which he supposed to be homœopathic remedies, were then prescribed; one to be taken regularly every six hours. Half an hour after swallowing each pill, the patient experienced anxiety, sense of oppression, spitting of blood. The pills were discontinued, and resumed on alternate days during a fortnight. Each time they were taken, they were followed by oppression, headache, acceleration of pulse, diuresis, and pains in all the limbs.

A girl, aged twenty-three, labouring under

cough, with hectic fever and sleeplessness, was also treated by these inert pills, which she imagined to be homœopathic. Each time after taking a pill, the fever diminished, the cough was less fatiguing, and she slept better ; she suffered more when she did not take it, and always requested to have her “calming pill.”

The following case occurred to a physician at St. Petersburg : “A lady, aged forty-eight, phthisical, had been treated by the homœopathic method during two years, when I became her physician ; and as my efforts were unsuccessful, she requested me to treat her homœopathically. I consented, and gave her two grains of sugar, assuring her she would experience the effects of this powerful medicine for six days. The following day she received me with an ironical smile, saying, ‘One may easily see, doctor, that you are not accustomed to handle homœopathic remedies ; that which you gave me was too energetic ; it caused so much disturbance, that I did not expect to outlive the night : however, its action is in the end salutary, for I have not felt myself so well for a long time as I feel to-day.’ ”

Thirdly. Two physicians attached to an hospital experimented upon the *infirmiers*, or male attendants in their wards. One physician desired his *infirmiers* to note down every hour the sensations they experienced, after taking what they supposed to be a homœopathic agent. They all experienced various sensations, of which the following is a specimen :—

A young man in perfect health took eight pills, containing a minute portion of charcoal, and at the expiration of half an hour had noted the following symptoms: headache, confusion of ideas, imperfect vision, flushing of the face. On repeating the same dose, the symptoms recurred, with violent perspiration.

Fourthly. The other physician conducted his experiments differently; he took every morning six homœopathic pills, and at the end of a certain period asked his *infirmiers* if they were willing to do the same; they consented, and did not experience the slightest effect.

Thus, in the former experiment, the individuals expecting to experience extraordinary sensations, from being required to note them down, do not fail to feel some, as would be the case with most persons under similar circumstances. On the other hand, those who saw no effect produced on their superior by the pills, also take them, and not expecting any particular sensations, do not experience any.

A hundred and thirty individuals were treated by homœopathic remedies at the Hospital La Pitié, under the superintendence of Professor Andral, and in the presence of numerous witnesses. The regimen recommended by Hahnemann was strictly adhered to, and the prescriptions prepared by a homœopathic chemist. The experiments were of two kinds; first, to ascertain whether symptoms can be produced in healthy persons by medicines which cure similar symptoms when arising from

other causes. Bark was one of the first substances chosen, and its various preparations were taken by M. Andral, and ten other persons, at first in homœopathic doses, which produced no effect; then in ordinary doses, which were gradually increased up to from six to twenty-four grains of sulphate of quinine per day. None of these persons experienced the least symptom of an attack of intermittent fever; the only effects produced by the large doses were slight indisposition and headache, in some whose stomachs were not so strong as the rest.

Aconite, which, according to the homœopathists is of superior efficacy to blood-letting in febrile diseases, was tried, and produced no effect. Sulphur was also tried by several persons, without any eruption being produced on the skin.

Thus the statement that remedies cause diseases resembling those which they cure, is an assertion utterly groundless.

The second kind of experiments was made to ascertain whether homœopathic remedies would in any case affect the progress of disease.

Several cases of intermittent fever were treated homœopathically. Some got well at the end of a certain period, which would in all probability have been the case had no remedies been employed; in other cases no effect was produced, and, on the usual method of treatment being adopted, the patients got rapidly well. Similar results were obtained in treating febrile diseases and several chronic complaints, except that in

some cases the patients got worse while under the homœopathic system.*

The homœopathists in Paris having petitioned the Minister of the Interior to permit the establishment of dispensaries for the treatment of patients by the homœopathic method, the Minister requested the opinion of the Académie de Médecine on the subject. The reply of that body is made in the following terms:—

“MONSIEUR LE MINISTRE,

“Homœopathy, which presents itself to you at the present time as a novelty, is not a new thing. For more than twenty-five years this doctrine has wandered here and there; first in Germany, then in Prussia, afterwards in Italy, and now in France, seeking everywhere, though in vain, to introduce itself as a branch of medicine.

“The time of the Académie has been repeatedly taken up with the subject, and, moreover, there are but few of its members who have not sought to ascertain its basis and its effects.

“With us, as elsewhere, homœopathy has been subjected, in the first place, to logical examination,

* M. Andral said, in the Académie de Médecine, he had taken quinine in the prescribed globules, but he had taken no intermittent fever. He had taken aconite, but without experiencing symptoms of plethora; sulphur he took, to try if he could catch the itch, but he caught nothing; neither, upon swallowing globules of arnica, did he feel pains as if he had suffered contusions, and so with various other substances. With respect to attempts to cure disease by this method, he was, in every instance, obliged to return to allopathy, inasmuch as under the homœopathic treatment the symptoms went on from bad to worse.

which has exhibited in it a formal opposition to the best established truths, a great number of striking contradictions, and many of those palpable absurdities which inevitably ruin all false systems in the opinion of enlightened persons, but which are not always a sufficient obstacle to the credulity of the multitude.

“With us, as elsewhere, homœopathy has also been subjected to the trial of facts, and put to the test of experience. Observation, faithfully interrogated, has furnished the most categorical answers; for, if it be admitted that some examples of recovery have occurred while under the homœopathic treatment, it has been ascertained that the success is justly attributable to the bias of a weak imagination on the one hand, and to the remedial powers of the constitution on the other. Observation has also shown the great danger of homœopathy in frequent and serious cases of disease, where the physician may do as much harm, and cause no less injury, by inactive measures, as by those which are directly prejudicial.

“Reason and experience are consequently united to repel a similar doctrine, and counsel that it should be left to itself and to its own resources.”

Dr. Fleischmann's homœopathic hospital is a private one in the convent of the Sisters of Charity in one of the suburbs of Vienna. It contains about fifty beds. Hahnemann's imperious rules as to rubbings and shakings are disregarded. The diet is light and simple. No coffee, tea, or wine is allowed. Dr. Balfour, who gave an account of this institution

in the *British and Foreign Medical Review* (October, 1846), observes with respect to the results obtained: "In taking into consideration the adjuvants to the treatment, the religious character of the establishment must not be forgotten. The patients find themselves surrounded by all the consolations of religion, by everything which, in their opinion, tends to ensure, in the event of death, a speedy passage of the soul to the realms of bliss—their minds thus set at rest with respect to futurity, they are less gloomy and desponding, and consequently react more favourably upon the body than under the opposite circumstances. The severer their disease, the more closely do they grasp their rosaries and crucifixes. The superiority of the attendance is also one great advantage in favour of this hospital, independently of the important fact just stated, that the nurses are spiritual as well as temporal comforters. The comparative youth of the patients in this hospital must also be taken into consideration; out of three hundred and twenty patients, two hundred and forty-five were under thirty years of age, and only four above sixty. The circumstance of comparative youth under all kinds of treatment has an immense influence upon the ultimate result.

"Again, the patients are admitted and discharged by the physician without any control; so that, to say the least, it requires a man to be very conscientious to decide impartially between temporary improvement and perfect cure, especially when he recollects that the fate of his creed, and of his in-

stitution, depends upon the nature of his returns to Government, which are made monthly. Cases discharged apparently cured may apply for readmission, and be, under some pretext or other, refused, while, to disarm suspicion, a few whose relapses are more manageable may be readmitted. I have seen at least one patient refused admittance, and that, too, the very day after his discharge, without any good obvious reason; it was that of a boy with effusion into the right pleura, following scarlatina. There was also a general anasarca state of the body, which speedily disappeared, but the chief complaint remained obstinate, and after thirty-three days' treatment with *bryonia* (second dilution), he was dismissed, slightly improved. This is not the only case of effusion into the chest which has been dismissed unimproved during the period of my observation, yet this scarcely agrees with Dr. Fleischmann's returns, as out of twelve with exudation in the pleura during ten years, he says he has cured all but three, who died; and a physician of the general hospital assured me that many such cases, after having been dismissed by Dr. Fleischmann, and subsequently refused admission, have applied to him for relief, which they have obtained by the use of purgatives and baths. Then again I may say, there are hundreds of trifling cases admitted here which would not have been admitted into any hospital in England, and even of these comparatively trifling cases many remain for weeks, nay, months, in the hospital, while more acute or more interesting cases are

hurried out too often with the cure incomplete. When the patient recovers, the case is published as one of the triumphs of homœopathy, whilst the many similar cases, where even homœopathic treatment has proved unavailing, are silently passed over, or are recorded as instances of the imperfection of the human intellect.

“The whole process of the admissions and discharge of patients is mysterious; still so much is certain, that most of those admitted have been previously visited at their homes by the assistant. I feel convinced that the great secret of Dr. Fleischmann’s great seeming success lies in the fact of the admissions and dismissals being uncontrolled, and there being no check on the diagnosis; rarely other than well-marked cases have the diagnosis written on the board at their bed-head, the others being left blank, and entered in his book, of course, as he pleases.

“Homœopathic remedies are not exclusively trusted to, for Dr. Fleischmann uses cold applications to the head in delirium, and sometimes in headache; cold washings of the body in fevers; and in arthritis cloths dipped in cold water, surrounded by oil-silk, applied to the affected parts. He also has for constipation clysters of warm water, or water mixed with a little salt; and in diarrhœa rice clysters. He told me that neither he nor any other homœopathists ever gave emetics or purgatives, and yet I heard his assistant once order a woman a spoonful of oil.”

Dr. Fleischmann does not act upon the *similia*

similibus principle, one drug serving for a great many diseases.

“Taking into view,” says Dr. Simpson, “the general mild character of the cases, his selection of patients, &c., the rate of mortality presented by those returns is not, as the homœopaths fondly urge, remarkably small, but is, on the contrary, enormously high.”

“Dr. Fleischmann’s returns were given to the English public to the extent of 6,500 cases treated by him in the hospital from 1835 to 1843. The general mortality from all diseases among those patients was 6·4 per cent., or, in other words, 1 out of every 16 died. The ratio of mortality is, it is true, much higher than that in metropolitan general hospitals. Mr. Thompson showed (*Edinburgh Medical and Surgical Journal*, 1843) that the average mortality of fourteen large English hospitals amounted to 9·7 per cent. The mortality of the largest hospitals in London during four years (1846 to 1850) was 8·4 per cent. Still, we repeat, the ratio of mortality in Fleischmann’s hospital was enormously high, for the class of cases treated were greatly less severe and fatal than the class of cases admitted into the allopathic hospitals with which they are wished to be compared; and there were various other principal conditions present calculated to diminish the apparent amount of deaths, and increase the apparent amount of recoveries.”

The apparent small amount of mortality of Fleischmann’s hospital, and two or three other

homœopathic hospitals, is, as shown by Dr. Routh, owing to a series of circumstances in no way connected with the method of treatment respectively adopted in these institutions. General hospitals have been usually established on benevolent grounds, for the sole object of curing the diseased where a cure was possible, or of temporarily alleviating and retarding their maladies where a cure was beyond the power of art. Most of these hospitals have their doors open for all applicants, the only qualifications required being a sufficient degree of poverty, with a sufficient degree of severity in the diseases, the slighter forms of disease being excluded, in order that the beds may be occupied with cases of greater urgency, and consequently of greater danger. Dr. Fleischmann's and the other homœopathic hospitals have been established, on the other hand, with the special view, among others, of instituting a supposititious and favourable comparison between the results of homœopathic and ordinary practice.

Dr. Routh observes: "They exclude moribund cases from their returns of cases admitted. This exclusion makes of itself alone a difference occasionally of from 2 to 4 per cent. on the mortality returns. These moribund cases are admitted in our allopathic returns, even though a patient be admitted but one hour before death."

The *grade of patients* varies the ratio of mortality in an hospital, and Fleischmann's hospital affords him a great advantage in this respect. "I can state from personal observation," says Dr. Routh,

“that the patients in Fleischmann’s hospital are not the very poorest, but the better class of working mechanics and manufacturers, while the patients of the general allopathic hospitals are oftentimes the most wretched objects living.”

“The age of the patients admitted into an hospital has great influence over its mortality returns. In infancy and childhood disease is especially fatal; it is least fatal from the ages of ten to forty. The number of persons in the general community living above forty years of age, is known to be about 22 per cent.; and the number living between the ages of ten and forty is about 52 per cent. But the three homœopathic hospitals, Vienna, Leipsic, and Linz, have a proportion of aged patients, not amounting, as it should do, to 22 per cent., but only amounting to 15 per cent.; while of patients at the most favourable age for recovery from attacks of disease—viz., from ten to forty—they admit (as their own returns unwittingly prove) a third too many—viz., 73 per cent. instead of 52 per cent.—showing, as various other facts show, a careful and cautious principle of selection, such as is calculated to give an appearance of success in their ultimate mortality returns.

“The amount of mortality of an hospital is, however, mainly dependent upon the relative severity, curability, and fatality of the classes of diseases admitted. The mortality in general hospitals is always very greatly increased by the number of very fatal, or altogether incurable, diseases admitted; while in a small hospital, as Fleisch-

mann's, the admissions, selections, and demissions of patients are solely under his own control and direction; the corresponding mortality is, as we can prove, immensely diminished by admitting very few or no examples of these very fatal or incurable maladies. Thus, while among 6,369 Edinburgh hospital cases 276 patients were labouring under consumption, only 98 consumptive cases occur among the 6,500 individuals admitted into the homœopathic hospital. The same fact holds true of other serious diseases. Thus, of the 6,000 and odd patients admitted into the general hospital of Edinburgh, and the homœopathic hospital of Vienna, there were of palsies 103 cases at Edinburgh, and only 5 at Vienna; of organic disease of the heart, 159 cases at Edinburgh, 15 only at Vienna; of organic disease of the liver, 33 cases at Edinburgh, 1 only at Vienna; of Bright's disease of the kidney, 82 at Edinburgh, none at Vienna; of diabetes mellitus, 17 cases at Edinburgh, none at Vienna; of internal aneurisms, 18 at Edinburgh, 1 at Vienna; of caries and necrosis, 57 at Edinburgh, 3 at Vienna; of malignant cancerous tumours, 53 at Edinburgh, none at Vienna, &c.

“Let us see, on the other hand, the proportion of several mild and non-fatal cases admitted at these two hospitals. At Edinburgh, among 6,000 hospital cases, there were 34 of cynanche tonsillaris, or inflammatory sore throat, while among the 6,000 Vienna homœopathic cases there were no less than 301 of this affection. In the Edinburgh returns there are 2 cases, in the Vienna returns 110 cases

of chicken-pox ; in Edinburgh 1 case of herpes or tetter, in Vienna 20 cases ; 48 cases of chlorosis and amenorrhœa at Edinburgh, 90 at Vienna ; 52 cases of influenza at Vienna, none in the Edinburgh returns ; and so on."

"I maintain," says Dr. Gairdner, "without fear of contradiction, that the homœopathic returns (of mortality) are not only without all triumph to the system, but that they cover it with disgrace. With such a selection of cases, they ought to have reduced their mortality to a far lower point than they have done." "And certainly," adds Dr. Simpson, "it was most impolitic on the part of the homœopathists to proclaim and parade the returns of Fleischmann's hospital as being 'far beyond the ratio of any other method of treatment.'" For, in fact, most of the provincial hospitals of Scotland and England, admitting within their walls *all* classes of applicants, and all forms of disease and injury, however severe and dangerous, have an average mortality considerably less than Fleischmann's. Fleischmann's mortality, with his rejected severe organic diseases and selected cases of trivial affection, amounted to 6·2 per cent. ; that of Aberdeen, to 4·6 per cent. ; that of Inverness, 4·3 per cent. ; and out of thirty provincial hospitals in England cited by Mr. Thompson, the average mortality of the whole is 4·4 per cent., or less than that of Fleischmann's by nearly a third.

"As respects pneumonia, in the treatment of which the homœopathists proclaim their great success, the homœopathic hospital returns from Leipsic

showed a higher rate of mortality than those from Vienna, as 13 per cent to 5 per cent. But a considerable proportion of the cases cited by Fleischmann as pneumonia were, in fact, bronchitis; and he did not return all the deaths that occurred among his pneumonia patients as deaths from that disease. Taking, however, the most favourable mortality, as compared with Diell's hospital at Vienna, where 189 cases of pneumonia were treated by diet and regimen alone, the number of deaths amounted to 14, or 7 per cent., and in Fleischmann's 538 cases it amounted to 28, or 5 per cent."*

Pneumonia, as is well known, is a much less frequent disease than bronchitis. In the general hospital of Vienna, the cases of bronchitis admitted an average about 7 per cent. of all diseases, the cases of pneumonia averaging about 2 per cent. But in Fleischmann's hospital the cases of bronchitis reported as admitted are not 7 in 100, for they do not reach 1 per 100; while the cases of pneumonia reported as admitted, instead of being 2 per 100, are returned as $4\frac{1}{2}$ per 100 of the whole. "The review of these facts," says Dr. Routh, "admits but one of two inferences; the cases are either picked or selected, or the diagnosis is wrong—cases of the milder disease, bronchitis, being officially returned as cases of the more severe and dangerous disease, pneumonia."

Dr. Gairdner, Lecturer on the Practice of Medi-

* "Homœopathy, its Tenets and Tendencies."

cine in Edinburgh, published three years ago a pamphlet in reply to Professor Henderson's remarks in the *Journal of Homœopathy*, in which, after speaking of the selection of cases, and the perversion of truth in the returns from Fleischmann's hospital, he adds: "I saw the results in this place in the shouts of triumph with which the publication of Fleischmann's statistics was hailed by the homœopaths all over Europe. 'What a wonderful hospital,' said they, 'in which the total mortality of diseases is only $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and in which the mortality of the several diseases is reduced to an inconceivably small fraction.' To the first allegation—viz., the small mortality of the hospital—I answered that it would have been very dreadful indeed if in an hospital in which sore throat and shingles, catarrh, dyspepsia, colic, headache, &c., were predominant diseases, the mortality had been otherwise than very small. But, I further answered, that *it was not very small*; not so small, for instance, as in fully one-half of the general hospitals of Scotland, and not nearly so small as in most of the provincial hospitals in England. And I further remarked that I doubted whether there was any hospital in England or Scotland which admitted 5 per cent. of cases of common sore throat, like this homœopathic hospital. Moreover, I thought, that under these circumstances 6 per cent. was an enormous mortality, considering that in Canterbury the hospital mortality is 2 per cent., in Cambridge 2·4 per cent., and in Exeter 3·2 per cent., under the ordi-

nary methods, and it is to be presumed without any selection of cases.

“To the second allegation—the small mortality of severe acute diseases in the homœopathic hospital—I answered that the whole question was, whether *those diseases were really severe*, and stated that the mere names given to them was no proof of their having been severe diseases; because every one acquainted with disease knows that the names given to its different forms are, to a certain extent, arbitrary, and that it is very possible to increase or diminish the number of cases of pneumonia, pleurisy, peritonitis, pericarditis, &c., as you choose to interpret certain symptoms and physical signs which have a grave or trivial significance according to the form and manner of their co-relation. I further stated that the enormous and incredible number of those diseases in the homœopathic returns was a proof to every reasonable mind that Dr. Fleischmann’s mode of viewing this subject was different from the common one—that his pneumonia was not our pneumonia, his pericarditis not our pericarditis, and so on; but, on the contrary, that he had swamped the cases of pneumonia, &c., as commonly so called, into a host of minor ills that flesh is heir to, and that in virtue of certain resemblances or analogies, such as homœopaths are too fond of following out (*similia similibus*), slight diseases were made to do duty in the returns for really severe diseases; just as in the entire hospital returns, when compared with those of other hospitals, slight and

trivial aggregates of disease were set against severe aggregates, without the least consideration of the elements of which these aggregates were composed."

"I wrote in 1852 (*Medical Times*): 'It is enough with respect to homœopathic statistics to know that they are collected by a few obscure hospital physicians from cases selected, treated, and named without control, with the single object of procuring facts in aid of a preconceived therapeutical dogma, and with the knowledge that the organs of quackery are prepared to carry the results all over Europe as an indubitable triumph.' This was hitting hard, I admit; but I maintain that I both required and had a right to hit hard, and the best proof of the necessity and the right is the deplorable fact that homœopathic hospital statistics are still appealed to in 1857, while arguments such as those I have given above are passed over in silence.' " *

It is inconceivable how readily statements and alleged facts as respects the cure of disease, promulgated by medical persons of no professional or scientific reputation, as also frequently by non-medical persons, are received on trust by a large proportion of the population. The fallacy of these statements becomes, it is true, apparent in the course of time, but in the meantime much mischief results. I have no hesitation in saying that, if inquiry were made respecting the antecedents of

* "Homœopathy and Homœopathic Hospitals." Edinburgh.

practitioners of homœopathy generally, they would be found to be persons having no claim to superior professional reputation, having, in many instances, failed to acquire practice in the usual way, and having adopted homœopathy as a means affording them the greatest probability of success. One of the few exceptions to the above remark, occurs to me in the instance of the occupant of the chair of General Pathology in the University of Edinburgh, who, in adopting homœopathy, did not, I believe, give up an extensive allopathic practice, and who does not now, it appears, restrict himself to the homœopathic treatment of disease. "I do not believe," says Dr. Gairdner, "Dr. Henderson to be anything worse than a man hopelessly involved in the mud of a hopeless position—a very Slough of Despond which he got into, it is true, foolishly ; but where being in, he has fought with an energy of determination and a thorough British pluck worthy of a better cause. Dr. Fleischmann's statistics, which Dr. Henderson vaunted in his first publication, and which probably converted him to homœopathy, have been given up in their original application by common consent."*

Another seceder to homœopathy, who demands some notice, is Dr. Horner, late Senior Physician to the Hull Infirmary and to the Hull Dispensary, who was President of the Medical Association, which met some years ago at Brighton, where

* "A Few Words on Homœopathy and Homœopathic Hospitals." Edinburgh : A. and C. Black.

homœopathy was discussed and condemned. He has published a sixpenny pamphlet (addressed ostensibly to the Governors of the Hull Infirmary, but really to the public), in which he states his reasons for adopting the *rational* system of medicine. "I have the satisfaction of reflecting," he says, "that the time is surely approaching when *none other* than the homœopathic treatment of disease will be tolerated in our public medical institutions." He further speaks of its onward progress throughout Great Britain and Ireland, yet far more throughout America, Germany, and France.*

Professing to practise homœopathy, Dr. Horner abandons, however, the principle that the infinitesimal doses are a necessary part of the system. "*The magnitude of the dose,*" he says, *has nothing whatever to do with the principle of the science.* It is consistent with the true principles of homœopathy to prescribe either strong tinctures of the crude drugs, as to give the most infinitesimal globule. It is the law of *simile*, of like cures like, that alone guides the homœopathist in his treat-

* "The London Homœopathic Hospital is ineffectual from the smallness of its income. The number of beds does not exceed twenty. In Germany, and on the Continent generally, homœopathy has by no means made the progress it ought to have done. In lively America it flourishes most."—*Journal of Homœopathy* April, 1856.

"The homœopathic heresy in the land of its birth is already a by-word and a jest, and it will not be long before the English people will treat it as a delusion and a snare."—*Lancet*, June, 1858.

ment of disease ; the size, strength, or weakness of the dose is a mere contingency."

"It is especially in acute inflammation of vital organs," he further observes, "that the curative action of homœopathy is most rapid." Of course, in accordance with the axiom of *simile*, Dr. Horner employed medicines in these cases which would cause active inflammation of vital organs if administered to healthy persons.

The author refers to the homœopathic statistics drawn up in Russia and Bavaria, by command of Government, under the supervision of physicians of the old and new schools (without, however, specifying whence the statistics were derived, or giving any details), and adds, "*Without any exception, the results are very greatly in favour of the homœopathic treatment.*" People in Yorkshire would not be very likely to know how far this statement is correct, and the accounts which I have given of trials made on homœopathy in Germany and Russia disprove it altogether.

"Homœopathy rests on experimental testimony," Dr. Horner observes. All the quackeries that have successively flourished for a longer or shorter time, have appealed to the same test, which in no instance has borne searching investigation or stood the test of time.

Some idea of the value of the results said to have been obtained by Dr. Horner's homœopathic treatment—of giving medicines in any doses—may be formed by professional men from the following statements: "*In the last three months I*

have had the *deep* gratification of *perfectly restoring eight cases* which had been declared to be *hopeless and incurable consumption* by their medical attendants; and *four other 'hopeless' cases* of consumption are at this present time *steadily progressing towards recovery.*"

Among the other cases specified, are three of epileptic fits, one of several years standing. The power of the homœopathic treatment (by what means?) was evinced from the *very commencement*, removing the pain in the head. The other two patients were females of sixteen and twenty years of age. Every medical man knows that epilepsy is frequently modified, and the recurrence of the attacks sometimes prevented for a time by the use of any remedy or practice in which the patient can be induced to place confidence. Esquirol remarked that all the new remedies which he employed on the epileptic patients in the Salpetriere, were productive, in some of the cases, of good effects for a time, but in no instance was the effect permanent.

Five cases of palsy are enumerated as having derived advantage from the treatment. One a young lady of twenty years of age (in all probability a case of purely nervous affection). The other patients were males of from thirty to fifty-five years of age. "On one of the patients the efficacy of the remedy was clearly manifested. Thus, from certain causes, the remedy was intermitted for four or five weeks, when not only was the hitherto progressive amendment stayed, but

the patient fell back; he is now quite restored." The power of mental influences in paralytic cases is well known to medical men. I have adduced, for the advantage of non-medical readers, a few instances in the appended notes.

Dr. Horner states that the late Mr. Liston was convinced of the effect of homœopathy by some experiments made by Dr. Quin on inflammatory erysipelas, injuries, and other surgical cases, notwithstanding the denial of several of the Hull practitioners that Liston ever gave a dose of homœopathic medicine; and he quotes some passages from a medical journal of the time in proof of Liston's conviction of the positive agency of the doses. If so, it does not appear that the conviction was lasting, for this distinguished surgeon did not, I believe, continue the homœopathic treatment in his hospital or private practice.

Experiments in hospitals, made by interested parties, with a view of acquiring the testimony of distinguished physicians and surgeons, as to the value of the particular remedies employed, ought to be conducted surrounded by all the requisite guarantees that they are of a *bonâ fide* nature, otherwise they are of little value, as numerous instances prove that the judgment of an individual with respect to the positive action of remedies is liable to be deceived. At all events, the progress of homœopathy since Mr. Liston's time has not been such as to show that it has now more real claims upon the confidence of the profession.

Probably some of the Hull practitioners may be

able to say whether or no Dr. Horner was in large practice, before he became a convert to homœopathy.

“The literature of homœopathy,” says Dr. Hooker, “is made up of flimsy reasonings and loose analogies. Even those works which are at all ingenuous present us with an abundance of glaring inconsistencies and ridiculous trivialities. The great majority of those who practise this system are poorly educated and irresponsible men. Unable to get hold of the profession, homœopathy has received most of its votaries from the people, and being rejected by the schools of medicine, has made a show of getting up schools of its own. While it has a scientific air, and puts forth the most ostentatious scientific pretensions, it comes before us very much in the guise of quackery, and uses all the appliances of quackery to gain popular favour.” *

“The worst part of homœopathy,” remarked

* Dr. Rankin, at the annual meeting of the East Anglian Branch of the British Medical Association, said : “Curiosity tempted me to discover the antecedents of several of those who have seceded to homœopathy. If we are to believe all we hear on this head, and which the public take for granted, there never was a diplomatised homœopath who had not resigned a splendid practice of the old system, and who, disinterested as he was, had not preferred to begin life anew rather than continue longer in the errors taught by a Cullen, a Gregory, a Prout, a Bright, or a Watson. Unfortunately for the disinterestedness of many at least of these gentlemen, the inquiries I have made entirely bore out the assertions of Dr. Barker that no instance has occurred of a man with a good practice becoming a convert to homœopathy. In those instances I have inquired into, I have ascertained that the individuals did

Dr. Cormack at the anniversary meeting of the Provincial Medical Society, "is, in my opinion, the *dishonesty* of the majority of those who live by it: when patients are once secured, they are, I think, very rarely treated in accordance with the principles of Hahnemann. I have not been able to hear of any one who honestly relies on homœopathy for the curing of disease, but I can point to many calling themselves homœopathic practitioners who attempt to relieve the symptoms of disease by the same means which we would adopt. A good many patients have come to me from homœopathic doctors, and I have thus discovered that even the commonest and the coarsest means are habitually used by them. Castor oil and aloes are advised in the ordinary purgative doses, camphor is given in very large doses," &c.*

The homœopaths of later times have abandoned

not in any case enjoy the confidence of the community; and in fact that, as regards practice, they were disappointed men."

"A patient of a correspondent of the *Medical Times* (July, 1858), now a respectable tradesman, was once a manufacturer of globules to a renowned London homœoquack, who made enormous profits by the sale of those chests, the price of which varied from two to twelve guineas, according to the size of the pockets of the *gobemouches* he had to deal with. In these chests the infinitesimal *armamentaria* were all duly portioned out and labelled, and specific directions given for their use. The manufacturer aforesaid now positively asserts that there was not one particle of drugs in any of the globules, but they all, however variously called, consisted wholly and entirely of sugar of milk. He adds that he cut the business because he really felt ashamed of the transaction he found himself engaged in."

* *Provincial Medical Journal*, 1851.

some of the more absurd propositions of Hahnemann as untenable, and perhaps not one would be found adhering to his axiom of the psoric principle, or itch, being the cause of the majority of chronic disorders. It must not, however, be supposed that their practice is always in accordance with their avowed principles; active medicines in a concentrated state being frequently administered, the patient supposing them to be the infinitesimal doses: strychnine, elaterium, and several others, admit of being thus given without detection, except by scientific investigation. Dr. Horace Green, of New York, told Dr. Simpson of a gentleman dying in consequence of his swallowing in sport a number of homœopathic globules, which, on examination afterwards, were found drugged with large and poisonous doses of strychnia.

“I have repeatedly heard persons who had tried homœopathy,” says Dr. Simpson, “being amazed at finding undeniable and sometimes very powerful effects from alleged infinitesimal globules or powders brought to them by their homœopathic physicians, and carried about with them in their own drug cases, whilst, when these patients themselves used the very *same* medicines, marked with the very *same* names, out of their own domestic homœopathic boxes, they found no result whatever to follow. The solution of this paradox is only too obvious, affording, as other matters do, evidence of the box of the practitioner being sometimes provided with allopathic medicines in doses sufficiently active. No infinitesimal globule tinc-

ture or powder is provided with so much of the appropriate drug as to impart to the dose any appreciable medicinal taste or smell; but tinctures and powders are often enough given by the professed homœopathist sufficiently disagreeable to both the tongue and nose; and the phials containing them are sometimes in such cases not allowed to leave the hands of the physician, but are regularly brought and carried off by him at each visit.”*

Dr. Taylor, in his work on “Poisons relating to Medical Jurisprudence,” records the following instance of the danger to which patients treated homœopathically are sometimes exposed: “A lady of this metropolis consulted a homœopathic physician who had acquired great repute as an advocate of the infinitesimal doses. He prepared and gave to her some white powders, with explicit

* “As persons are inclined to ridicule infinitesimal doses,” says the author of ‘Confessions of a Homœopathist,’ “it is sometimes highly useful to give them powerful doses of various highly-concentrated medicines in globules similar in appearance to all the rest, but consisting of morphia, strychnine, arsenic, corrosive sublimate, and such like. A few of these, mingled with ground sugar and starch globules, will cause effects to be felt by the sceptic which will quickly overcome his disbelief. He generally makes an excellent patient, and often a good decoy duck. Never scruple in paralytic cases to give strychnine largely, but never allow it to be supposed that you are giving more at a dose than the hundred-thousandth part of a grain. This rule may be followed in other complaints with other very active drugs, such as croton oil; but this is one of our profoundest secrets, and must be kept so. Were it known, our wonder-working powers would be reduced in the estimation of the public.”

instructions as to the mode of taking them, and the nights on which they were to be taken. She took two, and on each occasion she suffered from great stupor, and all the symptoms of narcotic poisoning, followed by diarrhœa. A suspicion arose that the powders contained some very active ingredient, and three of them were sent to me for analysis. It was first ascertained that although in appearance, and from the directions, they were intended to pass as equally divided doses of the same medicine, they differed greatly in weight. The first weighed 3-4 grains; it consisted of calomel and morphia, the latter being in the proportion of one grain. The second weighed 1-5 grain; it consisted entirely of sugar and milk, and contained no morphia, nor any mineral matter. The third weighed two grains; it was composed of calomel and morphia, the latter forming about one-fourth the weight, or half a grain. The cause of the alarming symptoms was at once explained. The quantity of morphia which the patient took cannot be conjectured, as the doses of morphia in the remaining powder followed no regular rule, but it appears to have been sufficient to destroy her confidence for ever in infinitesimal doses. This case, while it shows in an unexpected way the gross deception practised on the public, and the risk of life which must be incurred by such a reckless mode of prescribing, affords a hint of some value to the medical jurist. Let us imagine that the patient had taken the powder containing the grain of morphia, and had died from its

effects, and that only the second of the powders with the written directions had been forwarded to a chemist for analysis; this would have been found to be sugar of milk. Had a charge of manslaughter even arisen, there would have been an admirable ground of defence in the allegation that the deceased had died of apoplexy, for it would have been argued she could have taken nothing but sugar of milk, with perhaps a harmless decillionth dose of some homœopathic medicine. The prescriber, under these circumstances, would probably have been triumphantly acquitted."

Dr. Simpson, commenting on this case, remarks: "I am told by the gentleman who gave these powders to Dr. Taylor—a physician eminently distinguished by his love of truth and justice—that the homœopathic practitioner in question is Dr. —, one of the oldest and most distinguished among the homœopathic physicians in England, and one of their most voluminous writers on the errors of 'allopathy,' and on the 'immutable' and 'all-important truths' of homœopathy. He has also duly and indignantly denounced all compounds like the calomel and opium discovered in his own powders."

The author of a recent medical work remarks: "A great many instances have come to the author's knowledge where waggish friends have substituted inert globules for those the patient was in the habit of taking. In one instance, success followed the cheat for three months. The inert globules were made potent by *faith*. The

patient was then told the deceit; her faith was gone, and the potent globules became inert. In another instance a cheat was *announced*, and the globules at once lost their power, but no substitution had been made; the infinitesimal was there in reality, but the faith in its virtue had departed. In a third, a friend, weary of hearing of the virtues of ‘nux’ and ‘calx carbonica,’ provided himself with a lot of sugar of milk, and took an opportunity to empty the whole of the medical armoury, and replace the stock with his equally harmless supply. The zest with which he now listened to the marvels of bryonia, arnica, &c., is a rich treat.” *

Is there, then, it may be asked, nothing good in homœopathy? Unquestionably, there is good, though it is more of a negative than a positive kind; the principal advantage that has attended the introduction of the practice into Great Britain being that it has materially tended to limit the too active medication in chronic disease which so long prevailed to the prejudice of the community; and to this suspension of a too active treatment during a course of homœopathy, the benefit derived is in many cases to be ascribed.

“To the personal character and interests of the general practitioner,” says a medical writer, “the drug-selling system is most pernicious, for it renders his pecuniary success in practice dependent, not upon his talents, but upon the quantity of pills and potions he can pour down his patients’ throats in a given time. It is almost superfluous

* “The Phenomena of Spinal Irritation.” Dr. Inman. 1858.

to say that patients thus drenched are apt to remember the consequences, and, cherishing a wholesome horror of 'doctor's stuff,' to commit the charge of their future health to the keeping of the homœopathist, or some such empiric."*

A few years ago, there were in London on the same day two public dinners for the benefit of two homœopathic institutions, at which many titled and influential persons were present. The subscriptions collected amounted, in the one instance, to upwards of 1,600*l.*; on the other, to 1,500*l.*

Of late, however, homœopathy is comparatively little heard of in some of the Continental cities where it was formerly prevalent, and even the homœopathic journal admitted, as we have just seen, its decline in Europe. In America, where, according to this journal, it still flourished, the medical practice is not dissimilar to our own, and quackery is extremely prevalent. Even in the United States, however, since the habit has been acquired of prescribing less medicines, homœopathy is less practised, as I am informed by a gentleman who has good opportunities of knowing; it is now most in vogue in the less civilised States of South America and in Spain; while in England, having served in great measure to remedy the former prevailing abuse of medicine, and the public having become more enlightened as to its effects, homœopathy has been for some time past on the wane. One of the hospitals has ceased to exist. The subscriptions to the surviving one, as also for

* "Medical Reform a Public Question." Hatchard.

the dispensaries in various parts of the kingdom, are no longer so liberally forthcoming as formerly. The hospital in Ormond-street contains about thirty beds, though many are vacant ; and the number of out-patients is smaller than when the hospital was in Hanover-square.

Another advantage resulting from the introduction of homœopathy is that it has led to more minute inquiry respecting the specific action of remedies ; it has tended, moreover, to make the circumstance more generally known, that much smaller doses of active substances, especially of sedatives and excitants, than had been previously supposed possible, are not unfrequently instrumental in remedying disordered conditions of the system where large doses have failed. It would, however, be absurd to argue that because an effect may be produced in some peculiar instances by one, two, or three drops of a substance, of which the ordinary dose is from twenty to thirty drops, as tincture of opium, a specific action can ensue from the exhibition of the billionth of a drop. Inconceivably minute portions of active substances will, however, produce specific effects in a few rare cases where a particular idiosyncrasy exists. Dr. Millingen, in his "Curiosities of Medical Experience," has adduced half a dozen cases which he thinks go to prove the special action of substances given in homœopathic doses ; but they may, I think, with one exception, be comprised in the same category with other cases where, though recovery or amelioration ensued after the

exhibition of the globules, there is a deficiency of proof that it was in consequence of the medicinal action of the globules. The fourth case is that of a young woman—to whom, it is stated, a homœopathic dose of a preparation of *nux vomica* was given—in whom the peculiar symptoms that follow a large dose of strychnine ensued, though she had been led to believe the remedy prescribed was merely a dose of calomel. Now, when we consider that an ordinary dose of strychnine is a twelfth or a sixteenth of a grain, it would not occasion much surprise, even admitting that a homœopathic dose at the lower dilution was given (the quantity is not stated), that the peculiar symptoms of this energetic medicament should be produced in an isolated case. The only fair test is, not to take rare exceptions as the rule, but to deduce results from trials with homœopathic remedies made on a number of persons ; this has been done by homœopaths themselves, as well as allopathic practitioners ; and as we have seen from the instances I have adduced, when a proper supervision has been exercised, the result has been a failure.

The practice of homœopathy has further tended to make more generally known how much may be effected in many disordered states of the economy, by a due attention to regimen, by the influence of the imagination and by the unaided powers of the constitution, and in this way has likewise rendered service.

Another well-known physician, Dr. Conquest, at an advanced period of his life, has acknow-

ledged his adhesion to homœopathy, and has just published a pamphlet of twenty-four pages, which, however, contains nothing new, and the reasoning of which will be but little likely to make many additional converts.* Dr. C. quotes Hippocrates in support of homœopathy, inasmuch as the father of physic remarks that “warm water, which excites vomiting, will put a stop to it *by removing its cause.*” Vomiting, however, may arise from various causes, and it is only when one of these is operative—viz., of there being offending matter in the stomach—that it would be likely to be effectual. Tartar emetic likewise produces vomiting, but I apprehend that few persons would prescribe it as a remedy in cases of vomiting from other causes.

In further attempting to illustrate the homœopathic law, *similia similibus*, the author adduces the instances of frozen limbs being restored by the application of cold, an inflamed surface by warmth and moisture. Having already shown in what way cold acts under these circumstances, I need only mention it here. “Copper in any form,” he further says, “*has been* followed by frightful spasms of the intestinal canal, and, *consequently*, is a well-adapted medicine for its relief.” Has Dr. Conquest ever prescribed copper, or known it to be prescribed, in any such case? “Camphor, belladonna, and ammonia,” he adds, “taken by some persons in health [how many in a thousand?], will produce efflorescence of the mucous mem-

* “What is Homœopathy?” 1859.

brane of the throat and skin—*ergo*, when taken in small doses, they are adapted to the mitigation or cure of scarlatina and other analogous affections.” These remedies would, however, only be had recourse to by judicious practitioners when indicated by special symptoms, and would by no means be had recourse to in all cases. Dr. Conquest adverts to the treatment of erysipelas by belladonna, in homœopathic doses, by Mr. Liston, at the suggestion of Dr. Quin. Of these cases, however, I have already spoken.

With respect to the action of the infinitesimal doses, he quotes Professor Daubeney’s opinion as to the efficacy of certain mineral waters, though they only contain one grain of iodine in ten gallons. These so-called iodine waters are, however, strong salt springs, and it is to this circumstance, and not to the fraction of a grain of iodine in a considerable quantity of water, that their efficacy is to be attributed.

“Sir A. Cooper,” says Dr. Conquest, “was accustomed to rely on half and quarter-grain doses of *hydrargyrus cum creta*, and Dr. Wilson Philip on the eighth of a grain of *pil hydrargyri* three times a day. These doses, however, which are still very far from the millionth part of a grain, were frequently repeated for a long time, and it was seldom that benefit was experienced till the treatment had been persisted in. Dr. Conquest likewise adverts to the apparently more favourable statistics of homœopathic as compared with allopathic hospitals, and he adds : “Here, again, the results are astounding,

and the wonder is that the entire medical body have not been startled by them ; and it is no less strange that the whole civilised world have not been roused into the most intense solicitude in a matter which so intimately concerns them." Having shown at some length the little reliance that can be placed upon homœopathic statistics, and the sources of fallacy in the apparent results, I need not revert to the subject.

Dr. Conquest concludes his pamphlet with the oft-repeated reference made by *quasi* discoverers to the persecution of Galileo, the opposition which was made to Newton's and Harvey's discoveries, and to vaccination. Time, however, which brought a just appreciation of the value of these discoveries, has not, as yet, done much towards establishing the principles of homœopathy.

Medical practitioners are frequently heard to declaim, and with justice, against the prevalence of various kinds of quackery in England, especially among the higher classes, almost exclusively attributing this prevalence to the credulity of the public.

A principal cause is, however, generally overlooked on these occasions—viz., the very imperfect state of our medical organisation, as I have endeavoured to show in another work. One of the causes of the prevalence of homœopathy—excessive medication—has been, to a great extent, removed ; and its removal has been attended with a corresponding good effect ; but there still remains a great deal to be done, especially as re-

spects improving the inefficient *medical* education received by a large proportion of those who are brought up to the profession ; and the circumstance that success in the medical career is so commonly obtained by other means than by superior qualifications, is no less operative. When the public have so frequently reason to be dissatisfied with the results of medical attendance by the “regular practitioner,” there is no cause for wonder that they should often have recourse to one or other of the forms of quackery which are so unceasingly obtruded upon their attention.

While the preceding sheets were going through the press, I have perused Dr. Marsden’s “Notes on Homœopathy.” In treating the subject I therefore deem it but right—in no ill-feeling to, Dr. Marsden, with whom I am personally unacquainted, but with a view to their correct appreciation—to notice some of his remarks. From what has preceded, the unbiassed reader will be able to infer how far the first assertion of Dr. Marsden is just : “Homœopathy, we know from experience, cures at the very least one-third more patients than the old school of medicine has the power of doing.” The cases which he adduces do not go far to corroborate this proposition. I select a few at random. His son had an attack of typhoid fever, with cerebral complication, to which he did not succumb. The hydropathic was in the first instance combined with homœopathic treatment; the

former was discontinued, and "he recovered completely under homœopathy." This may be granted without admitting that of which there is no proof—that his recovery was in consequence of the homœopathic medication. Cases of typhoid fever, as of other acute diseases, especially in young subjects, not unfrequently recover, as is well known, under the *médicine expectante*. I have witnessed several instances of this when formerly attending the Paris hospitals. Among the cases noted by Dr. Marsden at the Vienna homœopathic hospital are two of ague, which "*yielded in a fortnight* to the billionth part of nux vomica given in attenuation with a billionth part of a grain of ipecacuanha." Another case was *cured* (the time required is not mentioned) by the millionth part of a grain of arsenic three times a-day. "A woman had been given up as lost from hemorrhage. A few drops of the millionth part of aconite, of ipecacuanha, of china, of secale carnatum, of nux vomica and pulsatilla, given each at a time in due succession, *stopped completely* the uterine bleeding, and these medicines given in the course of treatment *completely restored her*." Every obstetric practitioner knows that cases of flooding, in which the patient is brought very low, but which do not prove fatal, are not uncommon, and none but a homœopathist would ascribe the stoppage of the hemorrhage to the infinitesimal doses employed in the above case; the bleeding having ceased, the patient naturally revived, as she would if no remedy had been employed.

“A young lady was attacked with severe rheumatics affecting the joints (knee, ankle, shoulder, and wrist), which were greatly swollen. The fever was great, and the pain most severe.” Aconite, bryonia, mercurius, pulsatilla, &c., *together with some water treatment*, cured her in nine days.”

These instances afford a good specimen of the *post hoc propter hoc* mode of reasoning.

“Except in one instance,” says Dr. Marsden “not more than the billionth part of a grain or of a drop of medicine was ever administered at any one time.” It is scarcely necessary to say that no cases, in which the treatment was unsuccessful, are recorded; the only exception being a fatal case of typhoid fever brought into the Vienna Hospital during Dr. Marsden’s attendance.

Transient symptoms, which commonly disappear of themselves, are set down as removed by the infinitesimal dose that may have been administered: “Sinking at the pit of the stomach,” says Dr. Marsden, “ignatia will generally relieve, especially if accompanied with hysterical symptoms, or if it be the result of grief; muriatic acid will succeed, if it be connected with gestation, and accompanied with want of appetite and sickness; oleander will be more applicable, if it be connected with spinal exhaustion and irritation,” &c. This symptom, as is well known, may generally be removed for the time, whatever the cause, by a small portion of food, or by a moderate stimulus—half a glass of wine, a little sal volatile and camphor, &c.” Again, “Fumes and flushings

of the face and the whole body, lachesis will generally conquer, when they are connected with *l'âge de retour*." This symptom, as is likewise well known, frequently appears and disappears suddenly in these patients without any obvious cause.

With respect to the fundamental doctrine, *similia similibus*, Dr. Marsden adverts to Hippocrates to prove that a substance which may cause disease in a healthy person was formerly "sometimes given with a curative effect to a person who had a complaint similar to that it gave rise to. Thus, a dose of castor oil will often cure a diarrhœa. Hahnemann was struck with the fact, examined the idea, and found it applicable to all medicines." Every tyro in medicine knows, however, that if a dose of castor oil be administered in diarrhœa, it is with the view of procuring the expulsion of undigested matter or irritative secretions, which may have given rise to or may be keeping up the complaint, but no sound practitioner would think of persisting in the use of this remedy in a case of diarrhœa. How far, it may well be asked, is the treatment adopted in the cases above quoted, in accordance with this doctrine? Would *nux vomica*, or *ipêcacuanha*, or arsenic, produce the symptoms of ague which they are said to have cured? Which of the numerous homœopathic remedies employed in the case of uterine hemorrhage would have produced hemorrhage in a healthy woman during gestation or after delivery? Would either the aconite, the bryonia, the mercurius, or the pulsatilla, which are said to have cured acute rheu-

matism, produce the symptoms of this disease in one not previously so affected? To be logical, the depressing agency of cold and damp, which are generally supposed to be exciting causes of this disease, should be called in for its removal; and not the transient application of cold water appliances, which often produce a salutary reaction in similar cases. Again, in illustration of this doctrine, Dr. Marsden says: "Belladonna will cure an inflammatory sore throat, *because it causes an inflamed throat (among other symptoms) when taken in repeated large doses.*" Under such circumstances, however, I apprehend that not sore throat, but symptoms of narcotism would be induced. "Belladonna will very often cure a throbbing headache (just as any other sedative drug might do), *because when taken in large doses it very often produces a similar kind of headache.*" As illustrating the positive action of infinitesimal doses, and the development of the powers of medicinal substances by minute division and trituration, the instances are adduced of the action of miasms in producing contagion or infection; of terrestrial magnetism, the electrical power being developed by friction, heat and fire by a like agency, &c.; but the analogy does not hold good, for these are instances of facts following invariably upon the action of the causes; whereas the positive effect of the homœopathic infinitesimal doses, and the development of the powers of their medicines by minute sub-division and trituration, are disproved by the evidence of impartial experience. Dr. Marsden

adopts, with some restriction, the dogma of Hahnemann, which perhaps no other homœopathist of the present day would be found to advocate—that psora, or latent itch, is the cause of many chronic diseases. He observes on this point: “I have no more difficulty in believing that suppression of psora may give rise to all the diseases Hahnemann mentions, than I have of the possibility of driving the gout from the extremities to the head or the stomach. That this one miasm—viz., the itch—be, conjointly with syphilis and syphilis, the exclusive source of chronic diseases, cannot be admitted without further demonstration than the great founder of homœopathy advances; but that it may be, and is, the origin of *very many chronic* diseases (the italics are Dr. Marsden’s), is an infallible fact in the minds of those who have given the subject the attention it deserves.” *

The above extracts may, perhaps, suffice to confirm, in the opinion of most impartial readers, the estimate which I have been led to form of the true value of homœopathy.

* The evidence, already referred to, of the late Mr. Liston in favour of homœopathy, is likewise adduced from the effects he observed from the effect of small doses of aconite and belladonna in erysipelas. There is, however, a wide difference between the dose of a grain and half of aconite, to be taken in the course of twelve hours, or even of a grain of belladonna dissolved in sixteen ounces of water (admitting that the amelioration was the result of these medicines, and not of the cessation from the previously adopted depletory measures), and the millionth or billionth part of a grain of the same substances, from which homœopathists profess to produce cures of acute disease.

HYDROPATHY.

GRAEFENBERG, formerly the head-quarters of the practice of hydropathy, consists of about forty houses, scattered on the acclivity of a wooded mountain which rises above the small town of Freywaldau, containing about 3,000 inhabitants. The country is salubrious, the air pure and bracing, and the water is excellent. "Among the half-wild mountains in Silesia," observed Dr. Scoutetten, in his report,* "where the medicine of the schools is scarcely known, the inhabitants still restrict themselves, in the treatment of the diseases and accidents to which they are exposed, to the means which nature offers. Of these water necessarily plays the most important part, and, together with forced sweating, are employed in combating a multitude of diseases."

These remedies, which, from time immemorial, had been popular in the district, were, however, more methodically and successfully applied by Vincent Priessnitz, originally a small farmer, who, it is said, when young, had his attention

* Rapport à M. le Ministre de la Guerre sur l'Hydrothérapie. Paris, 1844.

more particularly directed to the advantages of cold water from the circumstance of his speedy recovery, by this means, from the consequences of a fall, attended with two broken ribs, and also from the rapid healing of a crushed finger. He was thus led to treat patients and animals on the same plan, and in 1826 had acquired considerable reputation in the surrounding country, which he was accustomed to perambulate with a bag of sponges on his back, applying water ablutions and compresses, to which were afterwards added, sweating, cold baths, and douches. The success attending the practice induced many patients from other parts to resort to Graefenberg, but considerable opposition was made on the part of the local authorities, before whom Priessnitz was cited to appear, and was prohibited from practising. On his appealing, however, to a higher tribunal, and proving that he used no secret remedy, but only pure spring water, he was authorised to receive patients; a physician was sent from Vienna to report upon the proceedings and the advantages of the treatment, and in consequence of his favourable report, Graefenberg was ranked among the Austrian baths.

In 1830 the number of patients amounted to only fifty-five, but in 1838 to upwards of 800, and at a later period to several thousands in the course of the year.*

* Since the death of Priessnitz, the number of visitors to Graefenberg has been comparatively small, being mostly restricted to Austrian subjects.

The Governments of Bavaria and other German territories likewise authorised hydropathy. At Breslau the professors of the University, and especially the celebrated anatomist Otto, greatly modified their practice by the more frequent employment of water. At Dresden hydropathy was favourably received. The distinguished professors, Carus and Choulant, regard hydropathy as a powerful means, calculated to render great service in the treatment of disease, after the prevailing enthusiasm should be succeeded by an enlightened appreciation of its effects deduced from experience. Several of the first physicians of Munich, especially Professor Ringseis, considered the cold water treatment properly applied as a powerful resource against certain diseases which have resisted the ordinary methods; at some of the restaurants of the latter city, wine was so little in request, that water brought from Schoenbrunn was sold. The Duke of Saxe Gotha gave up a château for a hydropathic establishment, as did also the Prince of Saxe Meiningen (Liebenstein), and the Prince of Reuss.

A considerable reaction has, however, since taken place in the public mind in Germany; the number of patients has greatly decreased, and some of the establishments have been closed.

Water in various forms and at different degrees of temperature has been employed externally as a remedial means from the earliest period; used in the form of bath by its detergent and revulsive action upon the whole surface of the body; and by

its preventing or relieving internal congestions, it acts beneficially as a most efficient prophylactic, and is eminently serviceable in the removal of a large proportion of diseases, especially of a chronic kind. Till lately, however, the regulation of the functions of the skin by bathing—especially by the use of the tepid baths—was more neglected in Great Britain than perhaps in any other civilised country; but, of late years, a greater degree of attention has been turned to this important point; and, from the organisation of public baths in London and in several of the larger provincial towns, very beneficial results have been produced as respects the improvement of the health of the lower classes.

In fact, when we consider the extent of surface occupied by the skin, its varied uses, both as the chief organ of sensation, in which the ultimate ramifications of the blood-vessels and nerves terminate, and also as that in which the important functions of absorption, perspiration, and the secretion of the sebaceous matter, by which its surface is lubricated, are carried on; its analogous office to the lungs, in favouring the decarbonisation of the blood, and its extensive sympathies with other parts—especially the mucous membranes of the air passages of the alimentary canal and the kidneys—we cannot fail duly to estimate the importance of bathing as the means best adapted both for maintaining this organ in a healthy condition, and also of rectifying many disordered states of the economy; and yet how seldom is

it that baths are recommended in chronic diseases.

Dr. Todd, in his work on Rheumatism and Gout, remarks on this point: "The skin is a great emunctory of water, of carbon, in the shape of carbonic acid, of lactic acid, of fatty matter in the shape of sebaceous substance. As long as the skin secretes freely it must aid the stomach in carrying off free acid, the liver in excreting carbon, the kidneys in separating water; and as it is the natural source for the escape of free acid, it diverts that acid from the kidneys. The quantity of water which the skin ought to secrete in health during twenty-four hours amounts to from one pint and a half to two pints, and this is very nearly equivalent to that which is separated by the kidneys. It is not difficult, then, to understand how derangement of internal organs may readily follow upon derangement of the skin."

Can it, then, excite surprise, that in individuals who pass months together without taking a bath, or perhaps even without washing the surface of their bodies, the functions of the skin should become materially impaired, its circulation torpid, its secretions obstructed and vitiated, frequently giving rise, by their re-absorption, to deranged states of the health, of which the cause is seldom ascertained, and which the practitioner vainly endeavours to remove by the internal administration of medicines?

Even in private practice, where there would be no obstacle to the free use of baths, how seldom

do they form part of the treatment, unless there should happen to be any existing disease of the skin! In many instances, however, the digestive powers become deranged, and the general health is undermined, from a neglect to pay proper attention to the state of the skin; and a large proportion of the catarrhal, rheumatic, and nervous affections so prevalent in the variable climate of Great Britain, might be traced to the same source. The tendency to these complaints, as well as to pulmonary consumption, would be materially lessened, were persons, while in health, accustomed to attend to the functions of the skin, by the employment of bathing and cold ablutions more frequently than is generally the case. Many people, it is true, who perhaps never take a bath, yet enjoy good health, for the influence of habit will often enable the body to support many things that are generally prejudicial. But, on the other hand, there is no doubt that many suffer from various unpleasant sensations and disordered states of health, referable to this neglect, which might be prevented by the more frequent use of the bath.*

Floyer, in his work on Cold Bathing, adverts to the employment of water as a remedial means

* "The practice of hydropathy has afforded some remarkable facts in connexion with this part of physiology and therapeutics. It is impossible not to see in this practice, after its excesses have been curtailed and its useful applications better determined, much that may furnish important aid in the treatment of disease."—Sir H. Holland's "Medical Notes and Reflections."

from a very early period at the numerous holy wells. "The people who resort to these places," he says, "come to be cured of fixed pains, whether in the joints or muscles, whether with or without tumour, and for such as come upon long rheumatisms and quartans, as well as strains and bruises, the rickets, and all weaknesses of the nerves, whether universal or of any particular member. They are immersed at all ages, from six months to eighty years; children are twice or thrice dipped and taken out again, and while they are in women are employed in rubbing their backs or the maimed parts. Adults stay in a quarter or near half an hour. As soon as the children are dipped, they, with their wet clothes on, are wrapped up in warm blankets over their head and whole body, and put immediately into bed, which instantly puts them into a violent sweat. In this condition they lie all night till towards morning; the clothes are taken off by degrees, so that they may cool gradually."

The Rev. Dr. Card, in his work on Malvern, speaks of the extraordinary cures effected by the water of the Holy Well. The monks of old used to wrap in clothes steeped in this water persons affected with leprosy or other eruptions, and make them lie in bed with the wet clothes on the diseased parts.

This is very analogous to the mode of producing perspiration formerly adopted at hydropathic establishments, where, however, the cold bath immediately followed the sweating process. The

original mode of procedure was as follows : Each patient was awakened about five in the morning by an attendant to undergo the *emuellotage*, or wrapping up, a blanket or woollen covering being first bound round so as to envelope the whole body; over this a second blanket was bound round. In a short time perspiration was induced. The window was then thrown open so as to admit fresh air, and cold water was given to the patient at intervals. When the perspiration had continued for the period that was deemed advisable, the coverings were taken off except the original blanket; a cloak was thrown over the patient, who descended quickly from his room to the bath, and casting off the blanket, plunged into the water at a temperature of from 9 to 12 deg. (Reaumur), with the perspiration still streaming from the pores of his body.

In most instances, the duration of the baths was only for a few seconds ; some patients, however, remained in for a longer period, in brisk motion and rubbing the surface of the body. On quitting the bath, the skin presented an appearance analogous to that of a boiled lobster. After being dried by rubbing with a sheet, the patient dressed, walked for an hour, drinking some glasses of water, and then went to breakfast; a direct increase of bodily vigour and of the appetite being commonly experienced.*

* "The cooling of the body," says Liebeg, "by whatever cause produced, increases the amount of food necessary. The mere exposure to the open air in a carriage, or on the deck of a ship,

It is well known that the impression of cold water or cold air on the surface of the body, throws the blood upon internal organs, which relieve themselves of the excess under the consequent reaction when the application of the cold is discontinued, and a glow, frequently with perspiration, is produced. The sudden passage of the body, while its surface is heated or in a state of perspiration, to a very cold medium, is generally considered, and very justly so, as highly dangerous; but in the cold water treatment, it is seldom found to be productive of prejudicial consequences, when under proper superintendence.

It must, however, be borne in mind, that in these cases the heat of surface and perspiration are of a passive nature, and not produced by exercise, by which the whole body is heated and the circulation accelerated, in which state a person could not go into a cold bath without great danger. In fact, the practice is very analogous to that which was adopted by the Romans, who plunged into the *baptisterium*, or cold bath, after leaving the vapour, or hot one: and also by the Russians and other nations at the present day. "The heat of the vapour," says an author who has treated of

by increasing radiation and vaporisation, increases the loss of heat, and compels us to eat more than usual. The same is true of those who are accustomed to drink large quantities of cold water, which is given off at the temperature of the body of 99·5. It increases the appetite, and persons of weak constitutions find it necessary, by continued exercise, to supply to the system the oxygen required to restore the heat abstracted by the cold water."—*Organic Chemistry*.

bathing, "to which the bather is exposed, is from 122 to 132 deg. Fahrenheit. Sometimes, when there are no conveniences for a supply of cold water, a Russian will rush out from the bath, and plunge into the nearest stream, or even roll in the snow. Acerbi states that almost all the Finnish peasants have a small house built on purpose for a bath; the apartment is usually dark, with only a hole at the top. They remain for half an hour or an hour in the same room, heated to 167 deg. Fahr. The Finlanders will sometimes come out naked and converse together or with any one near them in the open air. If travellers happen to pass by while the peasants of a hamlet or little village are in the bath, and their assistance is needed, they will leave the bath, and assist in yoking and unyoking, and fetching provender for the horses, or in anything else, without any sort of covering, while the travellers sit shivering with cold, though wrapped in good wolf-skin. The Finnish peasants pass thus instantaneously from an atmosphere of 167 deg. Fahr. to one in which the thermometer is as low as 24 deg. below zero, which is the same thing as going out of boiling into freezing water; and, what is more astonishing, without the least inconvenience, while other people are very sensibly affected by a variation of but five degrees, and in danger of being affected by rheumatism by the most trifling wind that blows.

"The Indians of North America have also their fashion of bathing, which is not very dissimilar

from that of the Russians. They construct a kind of stove, by fixing several small poles into the ground, the tops of which they fix together, so as to form a rotunda, and then cover it with skins and blankets, so accurately, that the external air is completely excluded. The space left for the introduction of the body of the person about to take the bath is closed as soon as he gets in. In the middle of this small apartment they place red-hot stones, on which water is poured until a steam arises that produces a high degree of heat. The effect on the person enclosed is a speedy and profuse perspiration, which may be prolonged at will. Immediately after coming out, he hastens to the nearest stream, into which he plunges and bathes for about half a minute; he then puts on his clothes, sits down, and smokes with great composure, and, what is of no little importance, with a thorough persuasion that the process will prove efficacious. The sudatory is often resorted to for the purpose of refreshment, or as a preliminary to the transaction of any business which requires unusual deliberation and sagacity.”*

In these instances, the time the person remains in the cold is not sufficiently long for the production of its depressing effects, which can be better resisted in proportion to the previously high temperature on the surface of the body. Hence, a person whose body is moderately warm would experience less inconvenience and danger

* Bell on Baths, &c., Philadelphia.

from going into a cold bath, than one whose skin is cool or when its vital powers are depressed.

The advantage of cold affusions in fevers, *when the heat of the surface is steadily above the natural temperature*, was clearly shown long ago by the practice of Dr. Currie; and the application of the wet sheet or of compresses to particular parts constitutes an essential part of the hydropathic treatment of febrile and many inflammatory complaints. A coarse sheet dipped in cold water and wrung out is applied, and over it other coverings are bound round the body. The application of the wet sheet causes a momentary sensation of cold and shivering; but the body soon becomes warm, and evaporation being prevented by the additional coverings, the wet cloth acts as a fomentation; the perspiration induced, being however much less profuse than when wrapping in blankets is practised. Where, however, the object is to reduce the heat of the surface, as in cases of fever or acute disease, the wet sheet requires to be frequently renewed before the requisite degree of reaction takes place. In these instances, the first impression is agreeable; the application generally allays irritation, reduces the frequency of the pulse, producing a tendency to sleep, and is thus a powerful antiphlogistic. As long as the skin is hot and dry, the application may be repeated, at first at intervals of a quarter of an hour, and afterwards at longer intervals, till a tendency to moisture appears. The cold water application has

been strongly advocated by many practitioners in acute disease, and its modified adoption cannot fail to be beneficial in many instances—as affording the most efficient means of lowering the temperature of the body; but when the feverish excitement depends upon inflammation of an important internal organ, there would in many instances be great danger from the frequent application of cold or an increase of the evil, in consequence of the blood being driven upon the internal organs at a time when the power of reaction is weakened. Hence the cases to which this treatment would be most applicable would be simple fevers, some cases of scarlet fever, and other exanthemata, angina tonsillaris, rheumatism, and lumbago.

Hip or sitz baths—the patient being seated in the water, with his legs over the edge of the tub—are also of very frequent use, combined with the wet sheet and other means. When employed for a short time only, and frequently repeated, the action of the sitz bath is tonic and bracing, causing contraction of the blood-vessels, and is consequently useful in various states of relaxation. When used for a longer period, a reaction succeeds on quitting the bath, more blood is determined to the parts; it is then a powerful derivative remedy, and is used to relieve congestion of the brain, or of the thoracic and abdominal viscera, and piles, by causing them to bleed, as well as constipation and other consequences of this state. In some cases of nervous excitement, head-baths

are employed, the patient lying with his occiput in a vessel of cold water.

Compresses of wet linen covered with a dry cloth (exciting compress) are also very commonly recommended to be worn on the epigastrium or round the body, as also on other parts, for the removal of abdominal disease, fixed rheumatic pains, &c. This is also a powerful derivative means, producing in most instances an eruption on the part. When the wet cloth is frequently renewed, and evaporation is freely allowed to take place, it is one of the most efficient means in the reduction of inflammatory action, especially in the skin, joints, and other parts, and has from time immemorial been employed both in private practice and in public institutions. The dressing ulcers and wounds with a bit of linen or lint steeped in cold water (as formerly recommended by Dr. Macartney), has also been long employed in some of the London hospitals.

Shallow and half baths, frictions with the wet hand or dripping sheet, while the patient is in the water, are not unfrequently employed at the present day, and sometimes tepid baths are used as preliminary to the cold water. Dr. Gully, in his work on the Water Treatment, advocates hot fomentations to the abdomen (which are commonly used in ordinary practice) as a means of allaying visceral irritation, of procuring sleep, relaxing the kidneys and bowels, of arresting bilious and nervous headaches, fits of asthma, tic, sciatica, spasm, infantile convulsions, continued vomiting,

and of relieving acidity and flatulence, and also as a preparatory measure to the applications of cold water, in "old persons, delicate females, bloodless and greatly debilitated patients, especially those affected with bronchial and asthmatic disorder of the lungs," thereby "enabling the skin to react upon the cold wet sheet, when it would otherwise not have done so. Extreme congestion and extreme general weakness may be thus coaxed, as it were, into commencing the attempt at self-restoration." A person must indeed be strongly prejudiced in favour of cold water to think of applying it in the above-mentioned states of the system.

Eruptions, boils, or abscesses, are often induced by the cold-water bathing and local applications, and these are generally considered as critical and beneficial by the evacuation of morbid humours, though in the majority of instances they are but a consequence of the excitation of the skin. In some patients, however, the perspiration eliminated has a strong fetid odour; the cloths and compresses being not unfrequently stained, and sometimes retaining a bad smell. Dr. Schmitz, late of Marienberg, mentioned to me many years ago the case of a patient who had taken sulphur baths seven years previously, but who had not used sulphur since that period. After she had been pursuing the cold-water cure for some time, her room smelt of sulphur, a bracelet she wore became tarnished, and her linen was stained of a yellowish colour. Analogous cases are recorded in the

works of Dr. Wilson and other hydropathic physicians, and foreign matters eliminated by the process, have been detected in the perspiration of patients.*

* Dr. Macleod, of Ben Rhydding, in his pamphlet on Hydrotherapeutics, reports some very marked cases where medicinal substances, which had remained for many years in the system, were eliminated by the hydropathic processes. One of these patients was a gentleman who had in India taken large doses of mercury for dysentery and yellow fever, and who, on his recovery, returned to England with shattered constitution, great susceptibility to cold, and depressed spirits. He improved under a mild hydropathic treatment, but at the end of seven weeks the symptoms suddenly became aggravated, and an offensive odour was exhaled from his person. "It was," says Dr. M., "unmistakeably the odour of salivation, and as offensive as I had ever before perceived in any patient. Saliva began to pour from his mouth, and jug after jug was filled with it." This state continued for three days, when the salivation began gradually to decrease; and in a week it had entirely disappeared. He then had for awhile those joyful spirits which belong more to childhood than to mature age. He was able to throw off a great deal of his flannel coverings. He continued in this state for about three weeks, continuing under treatment. His spirits then began to flag, he became restless and irritable, his bowels were constipated, and his appetite failed. He was unwilling to go out, and wished again to put on his flannels. In a few days a red itchy papular eruption appeared under the compress, and gradually extended over the entire body. The same sort of odour was again perceived to arise from the person; the salivation again showed itself; the spirits became saddened, and from the severity of the heat and irritation occasioned by the eruption, he was unable to remain a moment at rest. An envelope for forty minutes, four times a day, soothed the eruption, and the patient felt stronger after each pack. The attack gradually passed off, and he was left (to use his own expression) a new man. He subsequently had three attacks, each milder than the one which preceded it. He gained in weight, slept soundly, and continued well.

A married lady at fifty-six had taken a pill every night for thirty years, and for eighteen years had suffered the

Although the external application constitutes the most important part of the treatment, the drinking copiously of cold water is no less essential in most cases. Some patients formerly used to drink from twenty to thirty goblets a day, though at the present time it is seldom that more than twelve are taken.

The exhibition of water, warm, cold, or tepid, is made to answer a variety of purposes in therapeutics ; water constitutes the most general

most intense headaches every three weeks, lasting for three days, and succeeded by vomiting, after which she felt relieved, but very depressed spirits, with inability to do anything, remained. No treatment had been of any avail. She had no appetite, and her bowels never acted except by means of medicine ; a mild course of hydropathic treatment, with an aperient pill every second night, were prescribed ; then all medicines were stopped—an enema of half a tumbler of water being administered twice a day. The bowels were not moved for eight days, after which there was a natural motion. After a week the compresses became coloured, gave out a most offensive odour, and required to be renewed every hour. For a fortnight the whole body emitted a similar odour, which was so offensive that she was obliged to keep her room. The baths became impregnated with it, and the smell of the sheet, after the envelope, was quite sickening : the smell was distinctly that of aloes. A physician, under treatment at the same time, said to me, “ Doctor, one would think you dealt wholesale in drugs, there is such a strong smell of aloes in No. 9.” At first the bowels did not act above once a week, and sluggishly. But when this elimination of matter had nearly ceased, they began to act every day ; the headaches entirely disappeared ; the appetite returned ; the lady became strong and went home, as she said, “ made over again.”

Dr. Macleod speaks highly of the hydropathic treatment in removing the weakness, relaxation, and congestive state of the uterine organs, which sometimes remain after cauterisation or local applications.

menstruum for the exhibition of medicines, and in the internal employment of mineral springs a large share of the effects is due to the operation of water, independently of its mineralising ingredients. The dilution of the secretions, and the amount of water absorbed and passing off by the excretories must, of itself, be attended with powerful effects in the performance of various functions, and in modifying the condition of the blood. Sir H. Holland ("Medical Notes and Reflections") makes some very just observations on the action of diluents, which it may be useful to make more generally known: "The principles of treatment implied in the name," he says, "are not sufficiently regarded in modern practice; on the Continent their use is much more extensive than in England; and under the form of mineral waters especially, makes up, in some countries, a considerable part of general practice. Putting aside the question as to mineral ingredients in water, the consideration more expressly occurs, to what extent and with what effects this great diluent may be introduced into the system as a remedy. Looking at the definite proportion which in a healthy state exists in all parts of the body between the aqueous, saline, and animal ingredients, at the various organs destined directly or indirectly to regulate the proportion, and at the morbid results occurring whenever it is materially altered, we must admit the question to be a very important one in the animal economy, and having various relations to the causes and treatment of disease.

“Diluents may be viewed under these conditions of probable usefulness : 1st. The mere mechanical effect of quantity of liquid in diluents, and the washing away matters excrementitious or noxious from the alimentary canal ; 2ndly. Their influence in modifying certain morbid conditions of the blood ; and 3rdly. Their effect upon the various functions of secretion and excretion, especially from those of the kidneys and skin.”

“There are many states of the alimentary canal in which the free use of water at stated times produces good which cannot be attained by other or stronger remedies. I have known the action of the bowels to be maintained with regularity for a long period, simply by one or two tumblers of water warm or cold on an empty stomach, and this in cases where medicine had almost lost its effect, or become a source of distressing irritation. The advantage of such treatment is still more strongly attested where the secretions taking place in the intestines, or the products formed there during digestion, become vitiated in kind. Here dilution lessens that irritation to the membranes which we cannot so readily obviate by any other means, and aids in removing the cause from the body with less distress and disorder than any other remedy. Dilution thus used, for example, so as to act on the contents of the bowels is beneficial in many dyspeptic cases where it is especially an object to avoid needless irritation to the system.”

As respects the effects of diluents upon various functions of secretion and excretion, this author

adds: "In the kidneys, for instance, the proportion of lithates and other saline ingredients, removed through these organs, may be augmented by a large and rapid passage of water through them, and the functions of the skin, as an excretive organ, may equally be rendered more active by the same means. It is probably in this indirect way that diluents have the greatest influence on the blood; and here we find the best explanation of their utility in certain cachectic cases, in which there is general disorder, a deficiency of the secretions, and in rheumatic fever, where the condition of the blood is evidently concerned as the main cause of the disease."

It is not my intention to enter upon the consideration of the various theories of disease which have been promulgated by some of the exclusive advocates of hydropathy, nor to attempt to refute one-sided assertions as to the inefficiency of other remedial means, which have stood the test of the experience of ages; but it may be admitted generally that the treatment employed in proper cases strengthens the nervous and muscular systems, gives tone to the body, and to the skin in particular; there is, consequently, a greater inclination and ability for exercise, a diminution of the undue susceptibility to atmospheric changes, and to morbid impressions on the nerves, which in a high state of civilisation are so frequently productive of disordered states of health. The pure air, the bodily exercise, the plain diet, the drinking freely of water, and its external employment by the wet

sheet or otherwise, inducing a copious excretion of fluid, by means of the skin and kidneys, must tend powerfully to renew the mass of blood, and to eliminate noxious matters which sometimes remain long in the circulation and give rise to intractable diseases. A vitiated state of the blood, as a cause of disease, has, in fact, been more overlooked by English than by continental practitioners, though, even abroad, it is only of late years that due attention has been sufficiently directed to this point, to which the introduction of hydropathy has conduced in a great degree.*

Good air, exercise, plain diet, abstinence from stimulating food and drinks, and tranquillity of mind, have been repeatedly insisted upon by medical men and others, as being the most essential means of preventing and obtaining the removal of the majority of diseases which a high state of civilisation and luxury induces ; and the former of these are more influential with the human race than with others of the animal creation ; for though a man be an omnivorous animal, and requires a variety in his food, yet by the too free indulgence of highly-seasoned viands and stimulating potations (the habit of which generally becomes more strong at a period of life when there is a less disposition for muscular exertion), not only is the appetite excited and a larger quantity of food taken

* Liebig observed to the late Sir C. Scudamore that by means of the water treatment a change of matter is effected to a greater extent in six weeks than would happen in the ordinary course of nature in three years.—*O. Cit.*

than is required by the wants of the system, but there is also a greater demand upon the nervous energies ; the quality of the blood itself, and consequently of the various secretions, becomes altered, which state of matters cannot long exist without derangement of the health manifesting itself in one way or another. This state of predisposition to disease, and several of the disorders to which it gives rise, might often be remedied by the exercise, early hours, and temperance enjoined as part of the water cure : but it is seldom that persons, so long as they feel themselves tolerably well, have the resolution to break through the chains of habit so far as to adopt even partially these precautionary means, by which the future assistance of the physician might be obviated ; but they go on in their accustomed manner, dosing themselves at intervals with medicines to relieve their most urgent inconveniences ; and it is not until the germs of disease become rooted in the system, and the symptoms are so strongly manifested as to indicate material interruption in the performance of important functions, that they are awakened to the necessity of sacrificing some of their accustomed enjoyments, and are forced to resort to other than merely palliative means for a restoration to health, which cannot at this period be effected solely by hygienic measures, and which is more effectually accomplished by a combination of these measures with remedies which alter and improve the quality of the blood, and impart tone to the nerves, by their general and gradual operation,

than by others which have a more directly exciting effect upon particular organs. Hence the reason why so many have recourse to mineral waters, and lately to the cold water plan, which, though more disagreeable in its immediate action than mineral waters, may yet be applied to several of the diseases of which I have spoken when treating of these remedial agents: especially to some forms of long-standing disorder of the digestive organs, particularly when arising from the causes which have been already referred to, viz., repletion, and a too luxurious and sedentary mode of life; some gouty and calculous disorders, which are so often dependent upon the same causes, especially when occurring in the young or middle-aged of full habit and otherwise healthy; inactivity of the skin, complaints arising from exposure to cold and suppressed perspiration—such as fixed and shifting rheumatic pains and stiffness, which are sometimes so intractable as to resist mineral waters and other means—are likewise not unfrequently cured by this treatment; and the undue susceptibility to atmospheric vicissitudes by which they were perhaps originally caused is often removed, as is also morbid excitability of the nerves, and its consequences, hysterical and spasmodic attacks; long standing intermittent complaints, either in the form of neuralgia, or irregular muscular movements, after having resisted other measures, have sometimes yielded to a hydropathic course, than which few things could be more calculated to counteract the influence of habit by which similar

complaints are so often kept up; syphilitic cases, when of long duration, and when much mercury has been taken; as also relaxation of the system, and other derangements of the general health, may often be removed or mitigated by this plan of treatment.*

An agent which acts so energetically upon the system may well be ranked among the *heroic* remedies, and as such requires much discrimination in the selection of cases to which it is applicable. As with Cadet de Vaux's method of treating diseases with hot water, as well as with many other plans of treatment which have been in vogue for a time, and have subsequently fallen into neglect—either from their inefficiency upon impartial trial, or from their too indiscriminate employment—so also the too universal use of the water cure, not unfrequently in cases to which it was little adapted, has often been followed by accidents and by an aggravation of the diseases it was intended to remedy. This proved to be especially the case under the energetic employment of the remedy by Priessnitz, sufficient regard not being paid to the differences of constitutions and other circumstances which call into exercise the powers of discrimination of the physician. “No rational man,” says a hydropathic physician who

* “The patients are most likely to derive advantage if young, and if the complaints have been induced by chills or cold. If they are of a feeble constitution, hydropathy is powerless. The study of general treatment, among which hydropathy must rank, is worthy of all the attention of practitioners.”—*Compte Rendu*, &c.

sojourned at Graefenberg, "can doubt that the possession of scientific knowledge would enable Priessnitz to be much oftener successful than he is, and would lessen the number of his failures. Certainly, it would prevent his taking in and submitting to a tedious treatment many cases which such knowledge would have taught him at first were perfectly hopeless. *There are many such cases in the establishment at this moment.*"*

Notwithstanding, however, the advantage which the water cure may be calculated to produce in certain disordered states of the economy, it must not be supposed that it is either so generally applicable or so successful as some of its advocates would have it considered; and the exaggerated accounts of its efficacy which have been given to the world by interested or enthusiastic parties, have done harm by leading to its indiscriminate adoption in cases to which it is but ill-suited. Thus, one non-medical author, after extolling Priessnitz as "one of the greatest benefactors of mankind—one of the most astounding geniuses of this or any other age, a second Hippocrates—the founder of a system by which all curable diseases, and many declared by the faculty to be beyond the power of their art, are to be cured by the sole agency of cold spring water, air, and exercise,"† filled his book with cases of cure of acute and

* Dr. E. Johnson on Hydropathy.

During the last years of his life, Priessnitz employed much milder means than at first.

† Claridge on Hydropathy.

chronic diseases, chiefly from the publications of hydropathic practitioners, who, like others interested in advocating any particular mode of treatment, usually abstain from bringing forward instances which would cause the success to be questioned. What, in fact, are the majority of publications written by watering-place practitioners, but one-sided accounts of the virtues of the waters of their particular locality, without any reference to other remedies or other places where the waters may be of equal, if not superior efficacy, in the very complaints of which the account is given? The same may be said of many remedies which have at times been trumpeted forth to the world, and though perhaps efficient in many cases, have nevertheless been subsequently laid aside, in consequence of their not answering the exaggerated expectations raised by their too enthusiastic advocates. It must also be borne in mind, in estimating the value of remedies, as I have already remarked, that it is not because a person gets well while pursuing a particular mode of treatment, that his recovery is a necessary consequence of the treatment, as the same result would very often occur under a different mode, or even where no treatment at all was adopted.

The accuracy of Priessnitz's diagnosis could not always be depended upon. "In a great many cases," observes an author who passed a long period at Graefenberg, and whose work is, on the whole, favourable to the practice, "the names of apoplexy, pneumonia, and serious fevers, have

been applied to some symptoms, which a few applications of the wet sheet or frictions caused to disappear, and of which the cure resounded through the colony as a convincing proof of the omnipotence of the method.”*

Another medical author who resided at Graefenberg likewise says : “ Chance furnished me with several opportunities of meeting, a month or two after their departure from Graefenberg, with persons whom I had seen give themselves up to all the exaltation of their enthusiasm, and I was quite surprised at the change which had taken place in their sentiments. A short time ago, I met a young Russian officer, with whom I had dined several times at the table of Priessnitz. ‘And how are your headaches?’ said I, after the usual salutation, recollecting his bragging, of which I had been a witness more than once; he replied, with some confusion, ‘My pains are the same as before; and I should have done much better had I gone to pass six weeks at Teplitz, instead of losing six months at Graefenberg.’ Another patient told me, that far from being satisfied with his journey, he believed he could date from that period the sufferings which now tormented him much more than those for which he had gone to Graefenberg. A lady who had taken care to avoid the ordinary excesses of Priessnitz’s guests, could not find terms sufficiently strong to express to me how disagreeable is the time which follows an

* Dr. Schedel. “Examen Clinique de l’Hydrotherapie.” 1845.

hydropathic treatment; the continual use of cold water had become to her a condition of her well-being, and when she was obliged to limit it in some degree, she experienced the same inconveniences as those which occur when one is suddenly deprived of a stimulant of which one has contracted a habit."

These instances would be found to be multiplied, if the truth could always be known. Many persons who feel themselves in better health at the time of the treatment, or for some time afterwards while still under the influence of the stimulation, and have consequently spoken highly of it, have, after a period, and on attempting to return to their ordinary mode of life, found the amelioration not to be of so permanent a character as they had expected, though comparatively few would, like the Russian officer, be disposed to recant what they had previously said, and to acknowledge that their expectations had been too highly raised. This remark is equally applicable to the results of other methods which have been unduly lauded, but which an impartial experience in time reduces to their proper level. *De toute chose il faut voir la fin.*

"One of the guests," adds the author just quoted, "maintained that Priessnitz cured every kind of intermitting fever in three days. I then recollected the only two patients attacked with fever whom I had known at Graefenberg, and who were not yet cured at the end of a month or six weeks. One of them had given up the water, and

had recourse to ordinary medicine. The assertion of this guest confirmed me in the opinion that Priessnitz is a favourite of fortune, such as is seldom seen ; for, at the moment when at Graefenberg an intermitting fever was braving him by its obstinacy, a few leagues off a panegyrist was found of his sagacity and of the infallibility of his method. After my departure from Graefenberg a lady died there ; it was then the custom to ascribe the occurrence of death to the bursting of an abscess internally, but on this occasion also, the opening of the body gave the lie to the favourite explanation. When the relatives inquired what had been the cause of the fatal termination of the case, the answer which they received was, that the patient's neck was too short to allow her to live. Where could there be found another man who would dare thus to express himself ? In what other place than Graefenberg would there exist a public who, instead of perceiving in such an answer the proof of the grossest ignorance, and of an unblushing effrontery, would, on the contrary, discover that of a profound wisdom ? What, then, will be the end of this direction of people's minds ? What will become of hydropathy, when it shall no longer be in fashion, and when time has torn off the tinsel with which it has been covered ? These questions present themselves spontaneously, when, on casting an eye over the history of medicine, we see that so many systems which have enjoyed as great a degree of fame, are fallen into complete oblivion. Precisely, because its value has been

exaggerated, it will not be able to avoid a reverse of fortune.” *

Dr. Schedel also mentions cases of intermittent fever which had been long (two months) under treatment by the cold water, and one case where the patient became tired of the treatment and had recourse to quinine, which soon effected a cure. He likewise refers to cases of chronic rheumatism and analogous affections, where the treatment was not attended with success, though, according to the hydropathists, these complaints are always cured. One patient had been under treatment for chronic lumbago for several months in the establishment, and was not cured; and Dr. Schedel says that similar instances are not uncommon.

The Italians (as well as the English) have a proverb, “ *Ogni medaglio ha il suo verso* ;” and on reviewing the reverse side, as regards the cold water-cure, from what has preceded, it will be easy to perceive that the method has not been so generally successful, and that some of the cases have had a fatal termination, even while under the treatment, or within a short time afterwards. Some of the exclusive advocates of the method have boasted of the small number of deaths which have occurred in the establishments where it is practised, as compared with those which take place where a purely medicinal treatment is pursued; but the comparison is not a fair one, inasmuch as the number of those who would leave their homes,

* Exposition des Méthodes Hydriatiques, par Ehrenberg et Heidenhain, Docteurs en Médecine.

when in a state of health attended with danger, to resort to a water cure establishment, must be extremely limited. The great bulk of the cases met with in these establishments is composed of persons labouring under various derangements of the health unattended with danger, which is most to be apprehended from the imprudent use of the remedy from which they seek restoration. "Of the patients who resort to Malvern," says Dr. Wilson in his work,* "for the treatment by water, air, exercise, and diet, seven out of ten labour under the interruption of more or fewer of the organs which minister to the digestion of food;"† and in fact the same may be said of a large proportion of those frequenting the different baths in the summer season, where, out of a large population of invalids, the mortality is extremely small on the spot, though many may subsequently find their sufferings aggravated, or have their lives shortened, by an improper use of the waters.

Hence it will be perceived that much discrimination is required as to the cases in which the water-cure is likely to produce benefit, or to merit a preference over other means of treatment. An unbiassed opinion can only be formed on this

* "The Dangers of the Cold Water-Cure."

† "Let me relieve your mind," says the writer of a letter to Dr. Bushnan, "of the idea that a water establishment looks like an infirmary, and presents at every turn disagreeable pictures of ill health. The fact is just the reverse; the patients generally seem in good health, and are so for all social purposes; the majority have only some trivial dilapidation of the system, indigestion, nerves, gout."

point after minute inquiry into all the circumstances and peculiarities of individual cases ; and those persons would often find themselves grievously mistaken, who, from hearing the account of cases of gout, rheumatism, or any other disease being cured by this or any other exclusive method, were to infer that it is necessarily suited to all or even to the majority of cases of those diseases, which cannot thus be considered in the abstract, but each case must be examined separately in order to modify and adapt the treatment to it according to the varying circumstances and peculiarities. It is true, that as there may be several roads leading to one place, so also in medicine, the same disease may frequently be cured by or subside under different modes of treatment, and it consequently behoves both the practitioner and patient to select the one which is attended with the smallest amount of positive inconvenience, and which requires the least time. Now the cold water treatment is not only a very unpleasant process, but a long course is, in most instances, insisted on by those who practise it, and a patient would not have much reason to congratulate himself upon his relief from an ailment, by a four, six, or eight months' residence at a water cure establishment, when by medical treatment, or by a properly directed course of mineral waters, he might have been cured in a much more agreeable manner and in half the time.* I do not say that

* Dr. Schedel says : " Four or five months is considered by the enthusiastic partisans of hydropathy as a short time of treat-

this is generally the case, but it is not unfrequently so ; and what I am desirous of advocating is, the necessity of a proper discrimination by unprejudiced practitioners, in the selection of cases to which different means of treatment may be applicable with the greatest amount of benefit to patients. I have, in another work, endeavoured to show that mineral waters—which have no ephemeral reputation, but which have been used in all ages—present the most natural, efficient, and agreeable mode of treating most chronic diseases.

An author, whom I have already quoted, observes on this point: “The medical treatment which approaches nearest to hydropathy is doubtless that of mineral waters. The analogy can, however, only be established between these means and a moderated hydropathic treatment, when the cutaneous stimulation is maintained within just limits, and that of the different secreting organs is not too active, though sufficient to eliminate from the economy and by the natural means, the *nescio quid*, the presence of which interrupts the harmony of the functions. That an actual elimination is sometimes established, there can be no doubt, since I have seen in gouty patients very abundant

ment.” And Dr. Gully also says: “I constantly have patients applying to me, to whom I say, you would recover by retiring to a farm-house, having care of your diet, rising early, taking appropriate exercise, breathing pure air, &c.; and this would be required to be continued for *eighteen or twenty-four months*. What the water treatment can do for you is to curtail that period by *one-half or two-thirds*, and so it is in *these slighter cases*.”

chalky matter come out of the abscess. But between an elimination of this nature, obtained by means of a very painful suppurative inflammation, and the mild and, so to say, physiological elimination directed towards the natural emunctories by the use of certain mineral waters, my choice would not be doubtful.

“The duration of the cold water treatment often requires several years in order to procure a result which would be obtained by mineral waters in a much shorter time, and certainly in a much more agreeable manner for the patient. But, besides the length of treatment which tires out the patience, there exists a very positive cause of disgust, which leads many to renounce hydropathy—viz., that they often find their complaints become aggravated during a tolerably long period.

“Most of the chronic affections which hydropathy professes to cure may be treated by appropriate mineral waters, and others by sea-baths. Not only can cold water not be made to supersede the use of all other remedies, but its employment must often be superseded by warm water.”

Again. “The identity of the action of mineral waters and of hydropathy is only apparent, for the effect of mineral waters is generally less violent, milder, and less disagreeable. They act more especially by exciting the functional activity of the secreting organs, and not, like hydropathy, by irritating and inflaming the skin and cellular texture, so as sympathetically to provoke the action of the abdominal viscera. Hydropathy should be the

less preferred to mineral waters, inasmuch as there are numerous well-ascertained facts where water, employed at an elevated temperature, has been followed by much more advantageous effects than are obtainable from cold or tepid water.

“It must not be forgotten that these waters are remedies composed by the mysterious hand of Nature, in which are often united the advantages of hydropathy with the power of medicaments of which the combinations escape us.” *

Mineral waters, however, like other remedies, are liable to failure, and in many cases hydropathy would be preferable to their employment, though these cases form, in my opinion, exceptions to the general rule. The most frequent reasons of the failure of a course of mineral waters when pursued upon proper indications, is, that patients either do not adopt the regimen which is so powerful an accessory towards promoting their efficacy, or that, on experiencing a certain degree of amelioration, they discontinue the treatment too soon; or else, after the course is terminated, they resume those habits of life which may have tended to bring on the disease. To the last-mentioned causes are attributable many of the relapses which ensue after a hydropathic treatment.

That hydropathy has been in many instances practised by incompetent persons has been made evident from numerous failures when it has been

* Dr. Schedel: “Examen Clinique de l’Hydrotherapie.”

employed *mal à propos*, and from the occasional fatal results which have given rise to judicial inquiry. The chief dangers to be apprehended from the abuse of the treatment consist in the too perturbatory action of the system, as in the forced sweating and too powerful douching, in the excessive excitation of the skin, producing eruptions and painful boils, and in the degree of collapse of the powers which may succeed the stimulation in weak persons.

In individuals of advanced age, and those of feeble reactive powers, the blood has become impoverished from the course being unadvisedly entered upon, or from its having been too prolonged. Dr. Schedel remarked that "livid eruptions often show themselves in persons of a certain age, presenting evidently the character of local scurvy." Similar results are, however, of comparatively rare occurrence at the present day, when milder measures have mostly superseded the more energetic course of proceeding formerly employed.

Some works have been published on the subject in this country as well as in France and Germany, both by hydropathists and by physicians of repute, in which the advantages and drawbacks of the practice are stated with tolerable fairness, and from their perusal a tolerably accurate idea may be formed of its general results. Having myself had opportunities of observing its effects on patients at various hydropathic establishments (as well as subsequently to the course) from the time of its

first introduction, I shall now briefly enumerate some of the principal chronic complaints to which its employment has been found most suitable.

M. Bonnet, late chief surgeon to the Lyons Hospital, says that the diseases in which the most complete cures are effected by hydropathy are chronic rheumatism and uterine engorgements. Sir Bulwer Lytton—who, having derived much benefit from his sojourns at Malvern, is a strong advocate for hydropathy—writes of it as being an absolute panacea for rheumatism, however prolonged and complicated; and of gout, he says, “it seems to take the disease up by the roots; it extracts the peculiar acid which often appears in discolorations upon the sheets, and on the application, or is ejected by other modes. But,” he adds, “I have not seen instances to justify the assertion that the returns of the disease do not recur—the predisposition, the tendency, has appeared to me to remain; the patient is liable to relapses, but I have invariably found the fit less frequent, less lengthened, and readily susceptible of speedy cure, *especially if the habits remain temperate.*”

Dr. Gully remarked with respect to this disease: “Truth compels me to state that not one case of gout, either under Dr. Wilson’s or my own observation in Malvern, was cured.” “Acute attacks,” he adds, “were speedily relieved, with the advantage of ameliorating the state of the abdominal organs; the attacks were shorter, less frequent and painful, the general health improved,

concretions disappeared, and the use of the limbs was regained." On the other hand, one of the best French writers on hydropathy, who is also a hydropathic physician, M. Fleury, disapproves of the practice in cases of acute gout, which, he observes, "increases the pains and all the local symptoms, as well as the general reaction." "It is," he adds, "especially as respects the consequences of gout, swellings, stiffness, contractions, and paralysis, that good may be looked for from the employment of hydropathy." *

That hydropathy is calculated to be attended with much benefit in a large proportion of cases of gout and rheumatism, will readily be admitted by unprejudiced practitioners, though as other means have been found to be highly efficacious in these diseases, it is questionable how far hydropathy is deserving of a preference over them. > Many cases of rheumatism are induced by accidental exposure to cold and wet, or by suppressed perspiration from other causes; and these are generally amenable to ordinary medical treatment, but if of long standing, might be equally removed by a course of hydropathy or of bathing in a thermal, saline, or sulphurous water. Where there is great susceptibility to be affected by atmospheric changes of temperature, and where, in other respects, the patient is in tolerably good health, the water-cure would often be preferable; but in the more chronic cases, where the blood is in a vitiated

* "Traité de l'Hydrotherapie."

condition, though hydropathy would frequently be productive of advantage, I should be inclined to expect that, by a proper course of thermal bathing in the summer season, followed up by a suitable winter climate, the benefit obtained would be of a more durable character, and the patient less liable to relapse. I would likewise say the same of gout, in which the blood is always more or less in a vitiated state, frequently as a consequence of too full living, a luxurious and sedentary life, and other causes to which those accustomed to a highly civilised and artificial mode of existence are exposed, and whose state of health would generally be improved by the regimen adopted at hydropathic establishments, even if they did not use the water externally. I think, however, from having had no small experience in these cases, that thermal baths are calculated to effect the greatest amount of good in the majority of instances, and much more speedily than hydropathy, in the case of strongly impregnated baths being employed;* that the absorption of the mineralising principles contained in the water acts most efficiently in improving the condition of the blood, weakening the predisposition, and in preventing the frequent recurrence of the disease, provided the patients be moderately cautious as to their diet and mode of life.

* Dr. Schedel says, "The ordinary period required for the hydropathic treatment of chronic gout is very often more than a year. The instances of relapse in patients who had been long at Graefenberg are numerous."

Many cases of dyspepsia, arising from confinement to sedentary avocations, the anxieties connected with political, commercial, or domestic difficulties and annoyances, undue mental labour, and excesses in the pleasures of the table, would be remedied by the change of regimen and mode of life pursued at a hydropathic establishment, especially when a too active medication had been previously employed to relieve the constipation so commonly attendant on these cases. The hypochondriacal feelings which so often arise from disordered conditions of the digestive apparatus usually disappear, or are very much mitigated, while patients are undergoing the course of treatment; as is also the case with other anomalous nervous sensations indicative of a general want of tone and a morbid susceptibility of the system to outward impressions. In this class of cases, however, as in others, much discrimination is required to determine whether the hydropathic treatment would be preferable to other means. Hydropathy has proved to be beneficial in many cases of cutaneous disease, as, indeed, might *à priori* be expected from its so powerfully determining to the skin and its purifying influence on the blood, which is mostly in a very deteriorated condition in chronic cases. When the disorder is local, douches and wet compresses are usually combined with the general treatment. The milder forms of skin disease—urticaria, eczema, and prurigo—are generally relieved or cured, if not of long standing; and even in some of the more intractable

forms of psoriasis and lepra, hydropathy has sometimes succeeded after the failure of other means.* In the trials of hydropathy made by Wertheim in the Hospital St. Louis, in Paris, a case of ichthyosis was said to have been apparently cured: a case of long-standing prurigo was cured; a case of psoriasis was aggravated; lepra was almost cured. Of nine cases of dry *dartre* (three of which were recent), three were cured in from four to five months; but in one case a relapse took place after the expiration of a few weeks.

M. Devergie remarked of these cases, "The water-cure did not produce a healing effect, or it modified the disease without curing it; this modification was, however, favourable, and the remedies subsequently employed were attended with more favourable results than would have been the case without the water-cure."†

M. Gibert, one of the physicians of the same hospital, tried the treatment in seven long-standing cases—viz., two of ichthyosis, which were apparently cured, but relapsed in the course of a few months; two of psoriasis, ameliorated; one of psoriasis, and also one of prurigo, cured.

According to M. Fleury, the cold water treatment is prejudicial in eruptions attended with secretions; the vesicular and pustular forms, whether acute or chronic, being almost always

* Dr. Walesworth, in his "Observations on the Malvern Water" (1757), speaks of intractable cutaneous diseases cured by its application.

† "Journal des Connaissances Médicales," 1848.

made worse, or, at all events, not bettered; but in the papular and scaly forms, it may be employed with greater probability of success.*

In most of the varieties of skin disease, the employment of sulphurous, alkaline, or saline thermal waters in the form of bath, is productive either of a cure or of marked beneficial results. In some cases of purely functional paralysis from suppressed perspiration, as a consequence of rheumatism or from temporary defective nervous power, the hydropathic process, varied according to circumstances, by its stimulating and revulsive action on the skin, is calculated to render service, if not to effect a complete cure. A writer on hydropathy records the case of a lady "who had been for nine years paralysed from the waist downwards, her limbs altogether useless; she had been pale and emaciated, and on coming to Malvern, had no idea of recovering the use of her limbs, but merely of obtaining bodily health. In five months she had become ruddy and full of health, and then her perseverance of being packed twice every day was rewarded. The returning muscular power was in three weeks advanced to perfect recovery of the free use of her limbs, she grew stout and strong, and now walks three miles daily."†

This was, in all probability, one of those cases of paralysis from defective volitional energy which I have treated in my work on Nervous Disorders, and kept up by the influence of habit for so long a

* "Traité de l'Hydrotherapie."

† Lane's "Life at the Water-Cure."

period. Two or three analogous cases are recorded in the appended Notes on the Influence of the Mind on the Body.

M. Fleury says that, in cases of spermatorrhœa, the cold water cure is more efficacious than any other means; the douche constituting an important part of the treatment. According to this author, general cold douches, administered two or three times a day, from two to seven minutes at a time, effected cures in some very long-standing cases of chlorosis, in which iron and sea-bathing had been found unavailing. On the other hand, hydropathy is not generally advantageous in syphilitic cases, though it is sometimes found to promote the favourable action of other remedies, and it has had a beneficial effect in remedying the prejudicial consequences arising from the abuse of mercury. It is not generally applicable in cases of intermittent fever, notwithstanding the assertion of Priessnitz to the contrary. In tic and neuralgic affections it is likewise often inapplicable.

Some writers on hydropathy, medical and non-medical, speak favourably of its efficacy in the early stage of phthisis. "I am thoroughly convinced," says Sir Bulwer Lytton, "that consumption, in its early stages, can be more easily cured, and the predisposition more permanently eradicated by a winter spent at Malvern, than by the timorous flight to Pisa or Madeira. It is by hardening rather than by defending the tissues that we best secure them from disease." He disapproves, however, of its employment in a more advanced stage.

A hydropathic physician, already quoted, thus speaks of the advantages of the cold-water cure as a means preventive of disease of the lungs: "There is something in the very nature of the water treatment which makes it singularly applicable to a weak and delicate state of the lungs. The skin also is a respiratory apparatus: it takes in and gives out the same matters which are taken in and given out by the lungs.* It diminishes the labour of the lungs by sharing it. Since, therefore, the office of the skin is the same as the lungs, the assistance which the lungs derives from it in purifying the blood must be very great indeed; and, consequently, the additional labour and distress which they are compelled to undergo, when the functions of the skin are obstructed, must be also very considerable." †

I have endeavoured, in another work, to show the great influence which a suppressed action of the cutaneous function has in the production of tubercle, by causing the retention in the mass of blood of matters which should be eliminated from it by this channel; and also that climate acts beneficially, no less by its effect in determining a greater degree of activity of the skin, than by its direct effect on the respiratory apparatus. Conse-

* "The researches which show that a function analogous to that of respiration is exercised by the skin and varied by disease, make it probable that, in perspiration, the excretion of carbon through this channel may be considerably increased in amount."—Sir H. Holland, *Op. Cit.*, on Sudorifics.

† Dr. Johnson's "Theory and Principles of the Water-Cure."

quently, a system which so powerfully tends to promote the excretory function of the skin, together with the out-door exercise taken in a pure air by patients at hydropathic establishments, would, I am convinced, be extremely beneficial to many patients threatened with, or labouring under incipient pulmonary disease, provided they possess a tolerable degree of strength, and there be no positively counter-indicating circumstances which would render the trial unadvisable; though I should not counsel such patients to pass the winter in a hydropathic establishment. Where there is much depression and a deficiency of reactive power, this course would be inadmissible. Dr. Gully speaks favourably of the application of the wet sheet in relieving some of the urgent symptoms of the more advanced stages, especially when properly employed in allaying hectic fever and profuse sweating, relieving the sense of oppression, and producing sounder sleep. M. Fleury states that hydropathy, on account of its revulsive and tonic action, is calculated not only to prevent the development of tubercles, but that it is also serviceable when the disease is formed in combating the congestive state of the lungs, in improving the quality of the blood and digestion, and also in relieving fever, sweating, and diarrhœa. "On the other hand," he adds, "the injudicious employment of the hydropathic processes has, in several instances, produced an aggravation in the tendency to phthisis. Hence the necessity of judicious discrimination in the adaptation of

those means to cases of pulmonary disease is imperative."

In many cases of scrofula the cold-water regimen is calculated to be of no less service than in the complaints already specified, but it might not be advisable to employ it in preference to other established methods of treatment. The practitioner must be guided in this, as in other instances, by the peculiarities and circumstances of individual cases. Persons who have resided in tropical or unhealthy localities, as also many of those who suffer from languor and generally disordered health without any tangible disease, frequently derive great benefit from sojourning for a few weeks at an agreeably-situated hydropathic establishment, whether pursuing a modified treatment or not.

The position of a hydropathic establishment is a matter of great importance as regards the results of the treatment. It should be in an agreeable, undulating, or hilly, well-wooded country, so as to present inducements to take walking exercise; the water should be of the purest kind and abundant; and it should possess spacious rooms and corridors for exercise, and other appliances for occupation and recreation in-doors. One of the largest of these establishments in Germany, which I have repeatedly visited, is Marienberg, formerly a convent of *dames nobles*, situate in one of the most picturesque parts of the Rhine, on an eminence overlooking the town of Boppard, and forming a conspicuous object from the deck of the passing steamer. A statue to the Virgin* (to

whom the edifice was dedicated) stands as a memento of byegone times, in a niche over the door. The apartments on either side of spacious corridors are conveniently fitted up; the price varying according to the accommodation. There is a large and cheerful reading-room, supplied with papers and periodicals, commanding a view of the Rhine. The baths on the lower story are sunk in the ground, about four feet deep; are sufficiently spacious to admit of the bathers moving about freely. About 150 persons could be accommodated at the same time. Besides the douches in the house, there are others in the grounds, one being at the Hermitage, in a picturesque situation at the foot of the Hundsdrucken range of hills, by which the prospect is bounded. As in other establishments, the water of the douches falls from a height of about ten feet through tubes, the diameter of which varies from two to three inches, so that a powerful column of water is made to fall upon the part exposed to its action. There are also descending and lateral shower-baths, in which last, a shower of water can be directed simultaneously to all parts of the body. The dinner consists of soup, fish, roast and boiled meat, cutlets, vegetables, and plain puddings; pure water being the only beverage allowed. Bread and butter and cold milk, serve for breakfast; the same for supper, with the addition of stewed prunes or other fruit. The same kind of diet is adopted at other establishments, tea and cocoa being allowed to patients in England. Another estab-

lishment (Mühlbad) which can accommodate about fifty persons, is a few minutes' walk from Marienberg. On the banks of the river, at Rolandseck, likewise one of the most agreeable positions on the Rhine, there is an establishment "surrounded by a large garden, laid out in parterres, leading through luxuriant meadows and woody dells. The accommodation is good : library, music-room, bowling-green, &c. There is a full complement of baths, a public one, being four-and-a-half feet deep and eighty feet in circumference." Laubach is another establishment also on the Rhine, near the Castle of Stolzenfels. The accommodation consists of three large buildings, containing upwards of sixty apartments, and a spacious apartment on the ground floor, for exercise in wet weather ; billiard-room, bowling-green, gymnastic apparatus, and reading-room. The stream, termed Fons Caruss, has long been celebrated.*

Within a mile of Wiesbaden, in the picturesque Nerothal, an establishment was formed some years ago, supplied with every requisite for the cure. The walks about the hills are pleasing and diversified.

Liebenstein, where there is one of the most frequented hydropathic establishments, is considered one of the healthiest parts of Germany ; its well-wooded mountains and rich grassy vales render it second to none in pleasing scenes and associations. The establishment (formerly appro-

* Dr. Bushnan's account.

priated to visitors to the mineral springs, which are now fallen into disrepute) contains, besides the saloon and lesser public rooms, seventy bed-rooms in the central portion, and thirty in each wing. The baths are well managed and the attendance is good ; no bath in Germany is so agreeably situated in the midst of a park twelve miles in circumference, commanding fine and varied views of the Thuringian forest, and stretching over hill, and dale, and mountain.”—Bushnan.

With the exception of Marienberg and Mühlbad but few English patients have of late been to the German establishments: as there are now so many of these establishments in England, where the comforts and accommodation are superior, there has been but little inducement to go abroad for the purpose of undergoing the hydropathic treatment. Malvern is perhaps the best position that could have been selected in England as the head-quarters of hydro-pathy, and is accordingly greatly resorted to for this purpose, there being, besides the large and well-conducted establishment of Dr. Wilson, three or four others. Dr. Gully has a double small establishment, one part for ladies, the other for gentlemen. The other establishments, likewise agreeably situated, are directed by Drs. Johnson, Marsden, and Grindrod, and Dr. Ayerst at the Wells.

The two principal establishments in the north of England, which I visited last summer, are situate in the picturesque Wharfedale, about twelve miles south of Harrogate. The first-formed, Ben-

rhydding, is of castellated form, occupying an eminence about half a mile from the road. Having been built expressly, the house is admirably adapted for the purpose. The grounds are spacious and tastily laid out with shrubs and flowers, and contain a gymnasium, a large racket court, with bowling avenue, and a compressed air bath, the only one of the kind in England, the use of which has been found to be highly serviceable in asthmatic and bronchial cases. Dr. Macleod considers its application to be very advantageous in consumptive cases; those on the Continent (at Lyons, Montpellier, Nice), have been especially beneficial in asthmatic complaints.

Upwards of 100 persons sit down to dinner in the height of the season, being for the most part inhabitants of the neighbouring countries or of Scotland. In the evening ladies' work, reading, music, singing, and dancing are the usual recreations.

Besides the usual appliances for the employment of cold water, the establishment is supplied with hot air and vapour baths, and apparatus for the local application of vapour. Dr. Macleod does not restrict his practice exclusively to the employment of water in its various forms, but has recourse to ordinary medical treatment when required by circumstances.

The establishment at Ilkley (where the Spa has been in great repute for many years) is of more recent formation, and is constructed somewhat in the Italian palatial style. It is nearly as large as

Benrhydding; there having been nearly 100 at the dinner table at the time of my visit. It is directed by Dr. Smith.

The recently published edition of Dr. Gully's work appears to be merely a reprint, the cases recorded being the same as in the first edition, dating from 1843-4; and the author's remarks, with reference to the harm resulting from too active depletory measures, and from the over drugging in chronic disease, at that time so much in vogue, remaining unaltered, notwithstanding the great change which has since taken place in the practice of medicine. The author, as might be expected from the translator of Broussai's work, is imbued with the doctrine of this pathologist, which—though during his lifetime, and for some time after his death, the generally prevailing one in France—has latterly become almost exploded, except among some old practitioners, and at no time found favour in this country. He accordingly ascribes all general disorder to a local origin, of an inflammatory or congestive character, observing: "We are much in the habit of speaking of 'general disorder;' in truth, there is no such thing. All the organs of the body may give signs of diseased action, but there are invariably one or more parts whose malady originates all that we see. So, also, of 'general debility;' there is no such thing. Debility *always* signifies the disorder of one or

more parts oppressing the healthy functions of the rest of the body: remove the disorder of these parts (it may be by positively lowering remedies), and straightway the 'general debility' vanishes."* With respect to disease likewise, Dr. Gully says: "It is referable to a morbid condition of some of the textures of the body" (page 450). "Acute disease is the violent effort of internal and vital organs to cast their mischief on external and less important organs. Chronic disease is the enfeebled effort of the same organs to the same end."

"That mischief invariably consists in the retention of an unnatural quantity of blood in them (vital parts), to the detriment of other parts of the organism; a retention commonly known by the terms acute inflammation, chronic inflammation, and congestion." Again, "In nervous indigestion there is, first of all, an inflammation of the lining membrane of the stomach to subdue." "Atrophy, or wasting, is the consequence of the double inflammation of the stomach and small guts"

* Another hydropathic writer takes the opposite view of the question: "It is the general disorder which first produces local disease; it is, therefore, the restoration of the general health which must constitute the first step towards the removal of local disease." (Dr. Johnson's "Theory and Principles of Hydropathy." Axiom 2.) Each of these writers is too exclusive in his opinion. There may be general disorder and debility, which are not referable to a local source; and, on the other hand, local causes may give rise to the one or the other; consequently, the treatment that might be advisable in the one case, would be inapplicable in the other. The attention of the profession was long ago more especially directed to the constitutional origin of local disease by Mr. Abernethy.

(p. 118). "Chronic rheumatism, deriving its origin from an intense inflammation of the digestive viscera" (p. 253).

These axioms would, I apprehend, meet with but few advocates in the profession, at home or abroad, in the present day. It is scarcely necessary to observe that several diseases are referable to altered conditions of the blood, which, it is true, may end by inducing morbid alteration of texture, but which do not necessarily do so; an excess, a deficiency, or variations of the innervation may likewise occasion diseases without any texture of the body being in a morbid state. In mucous indigestion, atrophy, and chronic rheumatism, a sub-inflammatory condition of some part of the alimentary tract, or of a viscus, may be present, but this is exceptional, and when existing is often a superinduced complication. Everybody's experience must have made them acquainted with persons labouring under chronic rheumatism, in whom the digestive functions are not at fault.

"I have heard Priessnitz himself declare," adds Dr. Gully, "that he never *cured* but one case of gout—that is, eradicated the gouty diathesis. The fact is, that to do so requires *three, four, or five years* of water treatment, careful diet, and absence from mental care. To be of permanent benefit, the water treatment of rheumatic gout of long standing should be continued at least *fifteen, eighteen, or twenty-four months*. I have been enabled to bring consider-

able relief in several cases, but the treatment did not exceed *three, four, or six months* in duration." Dr. Gully adds that he has cured one case of this disease. "The patient was only thirty-two years old, and had been afflicted only two years ; so that by the *brisk and persevering action of the treatment during nearly five months, on a tolerably good constitution*, the pains disappeared altogether." *

I doubt whether some of the opinions expressed in Dr. Gully's work would find a single adherent in the profession—such as that the spinal cord is the seat of the will ; that the alvine excrementitious matter is not the residue of the food that has served for the nutrition of the body, but a secretion "from the blood which circulates in the mucous lining of the colon ; just as gastric juice is a secretion from the same membrane of the stomach, the tears from the mucous membrane of the lachrymal glands, the wax from that membrane of the outer ear." The opinion that "constipation depends

* I have referred to the great advantage derivable from thermal mineralised baths in most cases of chronic rheumatism. Dr. Gully, however, who, like most practitioners advocating a particular remedy or mode of treatment, ignores all others, remarks on this point : " If there be one course of treatment more binding on the practitioner than another, it is that which enjoins the use of cold, and the avoidance of hot baths in chronic rheumatism. There is no more certain way of inveterating that malady than the parboiling which so many undergo at hot springs ; and this because it both debilitates the digestive functions, and renders the skin more sensitive to external influences." The assertion that "you *never* see a phlegmatic nature attacked by rheumatism or tic, and very rarely by gout," is disproved by general experience.

upon an unequal distribution of blood, to the detriment of the colon, which is not sufficiently supplied," may be true as respects some cases; but constipation may arise from a variety of causes by which the muscular tone of the bowels is impaired, and their peristaltic action impeded.

Dr. Gully's book, though presenting a too partial view of the advantages to be derived from hydro-pathy, is, perhaps, the best which we possess on the subject. Had it been revised by the author prior to publication, he would doubtless have seen reason to modify, if not to suppress, some of the opinions expressed many years ago.

Dr. Edward Johnson, in his "Results of Hydro-pathy," professes himself not to be a "whole hog" hydropathist, but admits that great advantage may be derived from the administration of drugs in many cases of chronic disease, which may even sometimes be beneficially combined with the water treatment, which, he says, "is perfectly compatible with any kind of medicine which any particular case may demand. It is much more than this; if there be any drug which possesses a curative influence over any disease, such influence will be increased a *hundred-fold* if its use be conjoined with this treatment."

Like most other well-informed hydropathic physicians, Dr. Johnson deprecates drinking cold water to a great extent. This practice is, he says, "never necessary, and is sometimes highly injurious, diminishing the healthy tone of the stomach, weakening its lining membrane, distend-

ing the capillary vessels of the stomach, liver, and lungs, and distressing the kidneys, and all for no earthly object." He advocates the cold water treatment in the greater number of chronic diseases; and urges medical men to recommend it in "that multitude of chronic ailments for which they are now accustomed to send the sufferers to all sorts of English and foreign watering-places, where the most that can be expected is a little temporary amelioration." "I am as certain," he adds, "as I can be of anything, that a great number of these might be permanently cured by *a few months'* submission to a rational hydropathic treatment. When it is possible to give up *twelve or eighteen months* to the prosecution of this treatment, I believe it is quite capable of curing the gout completely and permanently."

Of indigestion and constipation, he remarks: "I am as convinced and certain as it is possible to be concerning any mere human affairs, that *no remedy under the sun* can cure these disorders except the hydropathic treatment." Is it to be inferred from this that no patient labouring under either of these complaints has ever been cured where the cold water was not employed as the remedy? With respect to the general duration of the treatment, Dr. Johnson remarks: "Two or three months is the minimum time in which any important amount of permanent good can be effected, except when the amount of disease is neither very great nor very important; but in old and inveterate cases, six,

nine, twelve months, and occasionally even more, are frequently necessary.” *

* Great part of Dr. Johnson's book is taken up with the attempt to establish the theory just referred to, that the alvine excrementitious matter is secreted from the large intestine, as also that indigestion is referable to the brain. He assumes that “ the whole of the food is taken up into the blood,” no part of it being expelled from the bowels; adducing the instances of persons whose bowels act only at intervals of several days, a case from Dr. Currie's “ Medical Reports,” in which a patient, who was supported for a time (not specified) by injections of broth and yolk of egg into the lower bowels, was relieved every three or four days by a well-formed evacuation. “ If a man's bowels,” he says, “ be thoroughly emptied by a strong dose of medicine, and if he then starve for twenty-four hours, and then take another dose, his bowels will be relieved again, and frequently as copiously as at first, and sometimes more so.” In these instances, it is the previously accumulated matter in the upper part of the alimentary canal that is expelled. It is not uncommon to find, after the action of a purgative, that there is still effete matter in the bowels, which a second purgative may bring away; but if the purgative be repeated, especially in the advanced stage of fevers, where the patient has taken only slops, it is seldom that solid matter will be expelled. Serous and mucous membranes secrete only serum and mucus in their normal state; and in the instance of special secretions and excretions (tears, saliva, bile, urine), special glands are essential. These find no counterpart in the large intestine, which, with certain modifications, is analogous in structure and office with the rest of the alimentary tract below the duodenum. It would require some stretch of the imagination to conceive that the same membrane which, by the absorption of injected nutritious fluid, enables a patient to prolong his life, should secrete effete solid matter derived from such nutriment. It is, moreover, well known that fæcal matter is found in the small intestines, in operations for hernia, and in *post-mortem* examinations; that large collections are not unfrequently found at the commencement of the colon (*cæcum caput coli*); that where any physical impediment causes an obstruction of the bowels, as in *intus-susceptio*, or strangulated hernia, after the lower bowels have been evacuated

by injections, there is no longer any production of fæcal matter below the obstructed part. The two cases which Dr. Johnson introduces at the close of his book, in order to confirm his view, would not be likely to produce conviction in the minds of practitioners; they refer to patients who ate largely, whose bowels were constipated, whose evacuations were scanty, and in whom there was no abdominal tumefaction. Every one must, however, have met with analogous cases where, with constipation in delicate and spare subjects, a great accumulation has taken place in the bowels not evidenced by abdominal prominence or other external manifestation. Most medical men are aware how easily (without there being necessarily any intention to mislead) isolated facts may be made to bend in support of preconceived ideas. No doctrine, however, can be maintained by reference to rare and exceptional cases, which may admit of various interpretations. As a general, though not invariable rule, the *egesta* will be found proportioned to the amount of *ingesta*, and in the cases of prolonged abstinence which have been recorded there was little or no alvine excretion. The most common cause of constipation is defective contractile power of the intestines, which may be produced by deficient general nervous energy, by anemia, or by local want of tone. In similar cases, tonics, as chalybeates, which have commonly an astringent operation, may act as aperients, by removing the cause of the constipation. One of the severest forms of constipation is seen in painters' colic, in which the muscular action of the bowels is paralysed by the poisonous influence of lead or paint, the head not being at all affected. So also with respect to indigestion; mental causes are doubtless frequently operative in its production, but many cases of indigestion occur irrespective of any such causes.

NOTES

ILLUSTRATIVE OF THE

INFLUENCE OF THE MIND ON THE BODY.

THE great influence exerted by the imagination and other mental faculties on the exercise of the bodily functions, and in the production and removal of disease, has not obtained the degree of consideration to which its importance entitles it, notwithstanding the effects of this influence are daily seen in the practice of medicine, and the subject has occupied the pens of several eminent individuals, both in ancient and more recent times. It is not my intention to enter at any length into the consideration of this subject, which would suffice to fill several volumes, but I purpose adding a few illustrations, by which it will be seen that this influence has not been over-estimated in the preceding pages.

The faculty which so frequently enhances enjoyment by anticipation—

“ Whose might
Can make the desert heavenly fair,
And fill with forms divinely bright
The dreary vacancy of air”—

and to which, when under proper control, the civilised world owes so large a share of its happiness, is also unfortunately instrumental in the production of much of the misery that exists, by the gloomy foreboding of expected evils, or by the ideal aggravation of present misfortunes. While, on the one hand, the happy effects of a well-grounded confidence are daily brought under the observation of the medical practitioner in the recovery of patients under the most unfavourable circumstances; on the other, the direful consequences of this instrumentality are strongly exhibited during the prevalence of some epidemic diseases, which are known to affect individuals in proportion to the degree of apprehension that prevails; whereas medical men and others, who under these circumstances are not so liable to be influenced by the terrors of an excited imagination, are much less likely to be affected by the disease, or, if they are attacked, the termination is favourable in a large proportion of cases. In many instances, again, and especially after accidents and operations, though the circumstances appear to be most favourable for recovery, yet if the *moral* of the patients be so affected as to make them apprehend an unfavourable termination, how frequently does it not occur that their prognostications are verified by the result! In like manner, predictions of the occurrence of disease or death at a certain period, by the hold they obtain on the patient's imagination, occasionally bring about their own fulfilment. It is said that in the Sandwich Islands there is a

sect who assume the power of praying people to death : " whoever incurs their displeasure, receives notice that the homicide litany is about to commence, and such are the effects of the imagination, that the very notice is sufficient with these people to produce the effect." It is also mentioned by Hearne in his " Journey," that " such is the confidence of the North American Indians in professors of the magic art, that they appear capable of curing the most serious diseases without resorting to any physical means ; and the feats of their malignity plunge individuals into diseases which often terminate fatally. One of these Indians, Matonabbi by name, conceiving that Hearne was in possession of supernatural powers, requested him to kill, by magic, a man against whom he entertained a deadly hatred. To oblige him, Hearne, without dreading any bad consequences, drew some figures upon a piece of paper, and gave it to Matonabbi, advising him to make it as public as possible. Matonabbi's enemy, who enjoyed perfectly good health, had scarcely heard of the paper, when he became melancholy, drooped, refused food, and died in a few days."

The following instances are recorded in the *Revue Médicale* (April, 1858). The first had been previously stated in other publications : " A man condemned to death was allowed the choice of dying upon the scaffold or of being bled to death. He decided upon the latter, when, his eyes being bandaged, a prick was made in the arm, but not in the vein ; a noise similar to the blood flowing

into a basin was imitated, the stream being gradually weakened. The subject, who retained all his blood, but who was thus led to believe that he had lost it rapidly, died as if he had actually been bled to death."

"A German physician obtained permission to make an experiment, with reference to the power of the imagination, upon a man condemned to die. It was proposed to him that he should be laid upon a bed whence a cholera patient, who had died, had been removed shortly before, on condition that if he escaped the disease he should be pardoned. On his being so placed, the physician, appearing to study the case, describes the symptoms of the disease in all its phases, asking the man if he experiences the various symptoms, and, allowing time for his imagination to conceive them, receives an affirmative answer. The symptoms declare themselves, the disease goes through its regular phases, and terminates fatally, yet the man had only been subjected to the influence of his imagination, never having been put on the bed of a cholera patient."

The two following cases are stated in a modern work.* "A weak-minded man, a clergyman, drinking wine in company, swallowed a bit of sealing-wax, when one of his companions seeing him alarmed, to increase his terror, jocularly called out, 'It will seal up your bowels.' From that in-

* "Preservation of Health of Body and Mind," by Forbes Winslow.

stant he became melancholy, and in a day or two refused all nourishment. On being pressed to give a reason for this refusal, he said he knew that nothing would go through him. He was, however, induced to take a cathartic, which operated freely; nevertheless, he could not be convinced but that his body was hermetically sealed; and with the exception of a little broth, which he was frightened into taking, he refused to swallow anything, and died in consequence."

"A young farmer, who detected an old woman breaking sticks from his hedge for fire-wood, seized her and threatened her with the terrors of the law. After some struggling she released herself from his grasp, and kneeling on the fagot in the bright moonlight, stretching her withered arms out to heaven, addressed him, already shivering with cold, in the following words: 'Heaven grant that thou never mayest know again the blessing to be warm.' He complained of cold all the next day, wore an upper coat, and in a few days another. In a fortnight he took to his bed, saying nothing could make him warm, covered himself with many blankets, placed a veil over his face, and from this single hallucination from fear of the cold air, he kept his bed upwards of twenty years, when he died."

The author of the "Anatomy of Melancholy" thus expresses himself on the subject: "Sometimes a strong conceit or apprehension will take away diseases; in both kinds it will produce real effects. Men, if they see but another man tremble,

giddy, or sick of some disease, their apprehension and fear is so strong in this kind, that they will have the same disease ; or if by some soothsayer, wise man, fortune-teller, or physician, they be told they will have such a disease, they will so seriously apprehend it, that they will instantly labour of it. If it be told them they shall be sick on such a day, when that day comes they will surely be sick, and will be so terribly afflicted, that sometimes they die upon it."

Again, " As some are so molested by phantasie, so some again by fancy alone, and a good conceit, are as easily cured. We see commonly the tooth-ache, gout, falling sickness, and many such diseases, cured by spells, words, characters, and charms. All the world knows there is no virtue in such charms, but a strong conceit and opinion alone."

A good illustration of the power of the imagination, and also of the great control that can be exerted by a strong over a feeble volition, was presented by the exhibitions of so-called electro-biology a few years ago, the operator being able to subject to his influence a certain number of those who mounted the platform to be experimented upon, and who could be paralysed in any part, according to his will, being, by the effect of his reiterated commands, rendered unable to rise from the chair, to walk, to raise the arm, open or close the eyes, &c. In like manner, through the suggestion imparted by the operator to the subject's mind, water could be made to taste like any

other liquor suggested, an object held in the hand would be made to feel so hot that the subject would be unable to hold it; he could be made to forget his own name, &c. These experiments can be varied *ad infinitum*.

I need scarcely allude to the more common effects of the imagination and of mental emotion known to every one, as illustrated by the production of blushing, paleness, fainting, privation of appetite, disturbance of digestion, and of other functions;* but it is too often overlooked, that mental influences are very frequently instrumental in the production and keeping up of a large proportion of chronic diseases; hence, a cause of the intractableness of many of them under a treatment exclusively medicinal.

A great many of the disorders of the digestive apparatus met with in a metropolis like London are induced and kept up by anxiety, the worry of particular avocations, and the annoyances and perplexities to which the professional, mercantile, and trading classes of the community are especially subjected. Such complaints may persist, or be constantly recurring for an indefinite period, deriving but temporary alleviation from medicine; but they not unfrequently cease spontaneously, if any circumstance occur to counteract the influence of the above-mentioned causes; as partial change of habits, a short residence in the country, the undertaking of a journey of pleasure, &c. The

* "Unquiet meals make ill digestions."—*Shakspeare*.

same may be said of the class of nervous disorders, many of which are occasioned and kept up solely by causes of a moral nature, as seen in the occurrence of some convulsive affections, viz., hysteria from mental emotion or antipathy, epilepsy from fright, &c. Deep sorrow, disappointment, and other analogous causes, are but too often the latent occasion of complaints which long resist the efforts of medicine, for the intractableness of which no obvious reasons can be assigned, and by their depressing influence on the vital powers, are frequently productive of some of the most distressing functional and organic diseases to which humanity is subject.

A large proportion of cancerous diseases originate in grief, disappointment, and similar depressing causes which interfere with the free capillary circulation, and alter the innervation of parts. Consumption is not unfrequently induced by the same influence, or by a combination of mental and physical causes, the operation of which, being necessarily very slow and gradual, mostly escapes observation till the germs of disease are firmly engrafted in the system, and only await the action of an exciting cause to bring them into activity. The complaint termed nostalgia, or home-sickness, is likewise a striking example. In these cases the individual, torn away from his country to fight or labour in foreign lands, droops and pines away without exhibiting the symptoms of disease of any particular organ, unless a hope be held out of his speedy return, when the cure

will sometimes be effected as if by enchantment.* Dr. Carrick, who had many opportunities of witnessing this disease, says of the Scotch labouring under it: "They get dull, will not eat, cannot sleep, or if they do, they dream but of friends and home; the disease is daily on the increase. There is but one cure; put them into a homeward-bound vessel, and let them tread once more their native shore. The same effect is also produced by disappointment in love; the female form cannot endure the worm that feeds upon the damask cheek. The concealment of her passion, brooding among the ruins of her peace, produces a mental anguish under which the body soon sinks."

With how much greater ease and lightness are all the bodily functions performed, when the mind is free from care and we are in good spirits! How languid, on the contrary, is the flow of the "nimble spirits in the arteries," when we are "besieged with sable-coloured melancholy!" and how much more liable are we under these circumstances to be affected by deleterious agencies of a physical nature! In an advancing army, flushed with conquest, disease rarely appears; if, however, the same body of men be dispirited by defeat and

* One of our most justly esteemed poets has thus alluded to this malady:—

"The intrepid Swiss who guards a foreign shore,
Condemn'd to climb the mountain cliffs no more,
If chance he hear the song so sweetly wild,
Which on those cliffs his infant hours beguil'd,
Melts at the long-lost scenes which round him rise,
And sinks a martyr to repentant sighs."

—*Pleasures of Memory.*

on a retreat, disease to a great extent will not fail to manifest itself, should they be exposed to any of its more common causes. The British troops in Walcheren continued tolerably healthy, notwithstanding the deleterious influence of the climate, till circumstances occurred to depress their *moral*. The same effects were seen on a larger scale on the retreat of the French from Moscow; and there is no doubt, that had the army been advancing with a prospect of good quarters, instead of being in retreat and undisciplined, it would have supported the privations consequent on the rigour of the season and scantiness of food, with the loss of a comparatively small number of men.

The power of the imagination and of faith is constantly exemplified in the action of remedies, especially in diseases of a nervous character. Thus we see that many patients, and more especially nervous and hypochondriacal ones, often find themselves much better after first consulting a new medical attendant.* Fresh remedies, when first

* Delille, alluding to the effects of Mesmerism, says:—

“ Tous se félicitoient de leurs métamorphoses,
 La vieille Eglé croyoit voir renaître ses roses,
 Le vieillard decrepité se ranimant peu-à-peu
 D'un retour de santé menaçoit son neveu ;
 Le jeune homme à vingt ans, ridé par la mollesse,
 Se promettoit encore quelques jours de jeunesse.

* * * * *

Mesmer courut ailleurs porter son art aimable ;
 Chaque malade au fond de son appartement,
 Tout seul avec ses maux s'enterra tristement,
 Et des remèdes vains implorant la puissance,
 Il perdit le plus doux en perdant l'espérance.”

—*L'Imagination.*

tried, are often attended with a remarkable amelioration, and not unfrequently arrest the attacks of epilepsy, neuralgia, &c., or mitigate their severity; particularly if the patient had been led to expect great advantage from their administration. In these cases, however, as the novelty subsides, and the patient becomes more accustomed to the remedy, its good effects frequently cease to be manifest.

In the memoirs of the Baroness D'Oberkirch is the following notice respecting Count Cagliostro: "It would be impossible to give an idea of the passion, the madness with which people followed this man. He was surrounded; he was beset; happy was the person esteemed on whom his glance fell. Nor was it in one province alone that this infatuation prevailed; the *furore* was not a whit less intense at Paris. A dozen women of rank, as well as two actresses, had followed Cagliostro, that they might continue under his eye the prescribed regimen; and the cure of the dragoon officer, whether real or feigned, had rivetted his power over the public mind."

Patients who entertain an idea that they require a course of mercury, will often derive great benefit, and will actually feel a soreness of the mouth, accompanied with an increased flow of saliva, on taking pills composed of bread or other inert substances, provided they believe themselves to be taking mercury. It is stated in the "Dictionnaire des Sciences Médicales," that a physician gave a peasant a prescription for a purgative, saying,

“Take this in some water.” The man, on his return home, actually swallowed the paper, which produced a similar effect to what would have resulted, had he taken the remedy prescribed. He returned in a day or two to the physician, to say that the purgative had quite cured him. At the period of Corvisart’s lecturing on the diseases of the heart, many of the students became affected with palpitation and other symptoms of these diseases, and it is well known that when medical students and non-professional persons read descriptions of diseases, they often become affected with some of the symptoms; or, if they had previously any of the symptoms about which they had been reading, these are almost constantly aggravated from their attention being more strongly directed towards them. The power of the imagination and mental impressions in producing hysteria is well known. Analogous influences, and an exertion of the will, also frequently prevent the recurrence of attacks of this disease. On the same principle are easily explicable the cures which have been performed from persons being placed on the tombs of saints; by touching holy relics; by pilgrimages to particular places; as in those affected with St. Vitus’s dance who were cured in the sixteenth century by a pilgrimage to a chapel dedicated to this saint near Ulm. I have given, in my work on “Nervous Disorders,” some cases of partial or total paralysis, in which the persons have continued helpless for years, and have ultimately recovered, either spontaneously or after some strong

moral impression ; but as it would be somewhat out of place to cite here detailed medical cases, I prefer illustrating the remarks which have been made, by a quotation or two from a work in general circulation :—

“ A large body of sailors resorted to Sadler’s Wells Theatre one night, and amongst them a man who was deaf and dumb, and had been so for many years. This man was placed by his ship-mates in the front row in the gallery. Grimaldi was in great force that night, and although the audience were in one roar of laughter, nobody appeared to enjoy the fun and humour more than this poor fellow. As the scene progressed, Grimaldi’s tricks and jokes became still more irresistible, and at length, after a violent peal of laughter and applause, which quite shook the theatre, in which the dumb man joined most heartily, he suddenly turned to his mate who sat next him, and cried out with much glee, ‘ What a ——— funny fellow !’ ‘ Why, Jack,’ shouted the other, starting back with surprise, ‘ can you speak ?’ ‘ Speak !’ returned the other, ‘ ay, that I can, and hear too.’ The man, who appeared an intelligent and well-behaved fellow, said, that in the earlier part of his life, he could both speak and hear very well, and that he attributed his deprivation of the two senses to the intense heat of the sun in the quarter of the world from which he had recently returned. He added, that he had for a long time felt a powerful anxiety to express his delight at what was passing on the stage, and

that after some feat of Grimaldi's, which struck him as particularly amusing, he had made a strong effort to deliver his thoughts, in which, to his great astonishment, no less than that of his comrades, he succeeded."

"When Grimaldi, worn out by premature old age, was almost deprived of the use of his limbs, so as to be scarcely able to stand or walk, he was visited by a friend, and when, with much difficulty, he had descended from his bed-room to the parlour, his friend informed him, with great care and delicacy, that his son was dead.

"In one instant every feeling of decrepitude and bodily weakness left him, his limbs recovered their original vigour, all his lassitude and debility vanished, a difficulty of breathing, under which he had long laboured, disappeared, and starting from his seat, he rushed to his wife's chamber, tearing, without the smallest difficulty, up a flight of stairs, which a quarter of an hour before it had taken him ten minutes to climb. He hurried to her bedside, told her that her son was dead, heard her first passionate exclamation of grief, and, falling into a chair, was once again an enfeebled and crippled old man." *

The following familiar instances likewise well illustrate the beneficial effects of moral impressions in certain diseased states of the system :—

"At the siege of Buda, that city had suffered from the effects of a long conflict, and the inha-

* "Memoirs of Joseph Grimaldi."

bitants had experienced the miseries of fatigue, bad provisions, and anxiety of mind. The scurvy had also made great progress among the besieged; the place was on the eve of being surrendered to the enemy, when the Prince of Orange introduced letters to the men, promising them speedy assistance; a medicine, which was represented to possess wonderful efficacy, and to be almost beyond price, was forwarded for the use of the garrison. Three small phials containing this precious panacea were given to each physician; this stratagem was completely successful. It was stated that three or four drops were sufficient to impart a healing virtue to a gallon of liquor. Invalids flocked in crowds to the physicians, and many who had not moved their limbs for a month before were seen walking the streets perfectly well.” *

At the time when Sir H. Davy was assisting Dr. Beddoes in his experiments on the inhalation of nitrous oxide, Dr. B. having inferred that the oxide must be a specific for palsy, a patient was selected for trial, and placed under the care of Davy. Previous to administering the gas, Davy inserted a small thermometer under the tongue of the patient to ascertain the temperature. The paralytic man, wholly ignorant of the process to which he was to be subjected, but deeply impressed by Dr. Beddoes with the certainty of its success, no sooner felt the thermometer between his teeth, than he concluded the talisman was in operation,

* Winslow, *Op. Cit.*

and in a burst of enthusiasm, declared that he already experienced the effects of its benign influence throughout his whole body. The opportunity was too tempting to be lost. Davy did nothing more, but desired his patient to return the following day. The same ceremony was repeated with a like result, and at the end of a fortnight he was dismissed cured, no remedy of any kind, except the thermometer, having been used.

When the metallic tractors were in vogue for the cure of several complaints, by being applied to the parts affected, Dr. Haygarth tried the experiment of preparing tractors composed of other than metallic substances, but which were made to resemble the original ones, and equally advantageous results ensued from their application. "False tractors pointed at or held to divers parts of the body produced sudden relief of pains, restoration of power to rheumatic and paralysed limbs, alteration in the frequency of the pulse, &c. In one case they produced an increase of pain, the patient declaring that after their use—that is, the use of *nothing*—for four minutes he was in more pain than when the surgeon took five pieces of bone from his leg in a compound fracture, and his pulse was raised to 120 beats."—(Dr. Simpson, *Op. Cit.*)

Dr. Warren, of Boston (United States), relates the case of a lady who had a glandular swelling in the neck of the size of an egg, which had lasted two years, and had resisted all the means employed

for its removal, so that an operation was proposed. To this the patient objected, but asked whether it would be safe to make an application which had been recommended to her—viz., touching the part three times with a dead man's hand. Dr. W. assured her that she might make the trial without apprehending any serious consequences. After a time, she again presented herself, and smiling, informed him that she had used this remedy and no other, and on examining the part, he found the tumour had disappeared. The cure of scrofulous swellings and sores in former days, by the Royal touch, is, as in the above case, solely attributable to the power of the imagination on the absorption of parts.

Dr. Routh tried the effects of medical faith in fifty or sixty cases, giving the patients coloured water (of which he used three kinds, red, yellow, and blue), which he described as a deadly poison, and had labelled accordingly. "I invented," he says, "a series of symptoms as likely to follow; from twenty to thirty drops being given as a dose. In many cases the result was null, but in some, chiefly neuralgic cases and weak-minded individuals, there were effects. In one case this coloured water produced such alarming symptoms that I was sent for in a great hurry to see my patient (a strong, well-built man, *æt.* twenty-five, who was labouring under some dyspeptic affection). I was informed that after every dose of the medicine taken (thirty drops of water, coloured with compound lavender tincture), syncope with convul-

sive movements followed. A diminution to twenty drops reassured my patient, and the fits did not recur. My colleague, Dr. Taylor, found coloured water produce such distressing symptoms in a female that he was obliged to omit it. If such effects were produced among out-patients, by whom all dietetic regimen was neglected, and when rest and quiet were not enforced, what good effects might not have followed the employment of coloured water with these adjuncts? ”—(*Fallacies of Homœopathy.*)

Imitation and habit influence in a remarkable manner the actions of the economy in health and disease. How frequently do we not see one person imitating the gestures of another, without being aware of the circumstance? * Children, in whom the imitative faculty is most strong, readily adopt the gestures and even the tone of voice of their parents or other persons with whom they are associated. The action of yawning, when we see others yawn, is a familiar example of the power of imitation. Muscular twitching of parts, squinting and stammering, are not unfrequently acquired by imitation, and are subsequently kept up by habit for an indefinite period. Movements analogous to those of chorea occur in some children in consequence of their associating with others affected with this complaint, which is in many cases kept up for a long time by habit alone. The

* “It is certain that wise bearing or ignorant carriage is caught, as men take diseases one of another; therefore, let men take heed of their company.”—*Henry IV.*, Part II.

same may be said of epilepsy, and other nervous affections. It is a matter of common observation, that if one female have an hysterical attack, in a place where several are congregated, as in the ward of an hospital or in any public assembly, others frequently become similarly affected. The mode adopted by Boerhaave, of arresting an epidemic of a convulsive nature, has been repeatedly quoted by medical writers, as illustrating the power of imitation and of moral impression over these disorders. A girl labouring under epileptic attacks was placed in the ward of a public institution, with other girls, who all became affected in a similar manner, and the complaint continued to prevail epidemically, till Boerhaave assembled all the patients together, and heating before their eyes a number of iron rods, expressed his determination to apply a red-hot rod on the face of the first who should have an attack. None of them had any recurrence, and the epidemic ceased as if by magic. Epidemics of a convulsive nature have at different times been propagated by imitation over a considerable extent of country; as in the case of the dancing mania, which extended so widely in the sixteenth century. Laughter is also frequently excited by imitation, and sometimes under circumstances but little likely to occasion merriment. Wesley relates, that paroxysms of uncontrollable laughter occurred at some of his prayer-meetings. He himself, and some of his most zealous followers, could not resist the infection, but laughed as loudly as the rest. He

accounts for the circumstance by ascribing it to the influence of Satan.

The paroxysms on intermittent fever are sometimes kept up by habit, until some circumstance occurs to break the chain. Charms and other agencies acting on the imagination not unfrequently thus arrest the disease. It is well known that change of scene and of mode of living have a most beneficial effect in many diseases. Most remedies on which a patient is led to place great confidence will produce an advantageous result, and often a cure, after the failure of other means. Time alone will frequently have this effect.

Dr. Horace Green stated to Dr. Simpson, when in Edinburgh, the following case: A lady had been useless and bed-ridden for years: the spine was her own alleged seat of disease, and endless measures had been tried to restore her to health, but all in vain. In consequence of the earnest advice and glowing representations of some female homœopathic friends, she had been long anxious to ascertain if homœopathic treatment could be of any use in her distressing case, but her husband refused to give his consent, believing homœopathy to be a "discreditable delusion and a quackery." Fortunately, however, for herself, her husband left her for a week or two on a sporting expedition, and she seized the opportunity to consult a celebrated homœopathic physician, who listened long, examined into her case most attentively, and, at last, on considering the whole, confidently assured her that he could send her a drug that corresponded

with her disease, and which would produce such effects the first day, other effects the next, &c., and that before her husband returned she would be able to walk and enjoy life. The patient diligently swallowed the globules; all the predicted effects duly followed; and when her husband returned home he was astonished and overjoyed to find his sick and bed-ridden wife up and well. The crime of consulting a homœopathist against his declared wish was readily forgiven, seeing the results of the homœopathic treatment had been so happy, but he asked for a sight of the wonder-working "globules." On being shown them, he earnestly desired them to be carefully preserved and locked up, lest, perchance, his partner's distressing ailments should at any future time return. He then went and informed his usual family physician of this secret, that his wife had got well under a homœopathist; adding that still he did not believe in homœopathy itself, for he found the globules which she had swallowed were not homœopathic drugs, but specimens of some small percussion pellets that were to be sent to him for examination, but which had not arrived at the house till some time after he had left. The servant had mistaken the packet of pellets for the packet of homœopathic globules; and the lady had swallowed them under the belief that she was swallowing the homœopathic physician's medicines.

"A gentleman," says Dr. Noble, "consulted me for sleepless nights. I thought it advisable to commence with a free action of the bowels, and

prescribed pills composed of eight grains of colocyath and two of calomel, to be taken at bed-time. When I next saw the patient, he told me the pills had given him an excellent night, for he had slept beautifully. 'But,' I said, 'did they not purge you? They were intended to do so.' 'Why,' he rejoined, 'as I had consulted you for sleepless nights, and as the pills were to be taken at bedtime, I thought they were to make me sleep, and I did sleep. I was not purged at all.' " *

Here was a case in which the ordinary action of powerful medicines was hindered by the dominance of an expectant idea.

The promulgators, pupils, and patrons of each of these unusual systems of treatment, are, like Hahnemann and his followers, all equally ready and equally entitled to appeal to the results of "pure experience" as the only infallible oracle and criterion of the particular medical doctrine and exclusive mode of cure, which, for the time being, they severally and zealously happen to favour and to follow.

No doubt the desire and the expectation of the symptoms will often conjure up their occurrence. I have known simple bread pills act as aperients, as diaphoretics, as diaretics, as narcotics, &c., when the patients swallowed them under the mental impression and conviction that they were drugs calculated to produce these special effects.

In one case, salivation and spongy gums followed the use of bread pills; the patient believing that his medical attendant was exhibiting to him what he had experienced before—an active course of mercury.

Professor Trousseau states that a Parisian, who determined upon making his fortune by medical charlatanry, secretly selected as his panacea distilled water, as the most innocuous substance he could use for his purpose. But he received so many attestations of the great potency of his medicine, and of the wonderful cures it had worked, that at last even he himself became convinced, and died in the belief of the universal efficacy of the Seine water. *

Dr. G. Moore quotes the following cases in his "Health, Disease, and Remedy," from the *British and Foreign Medical Review* :—

"A very intelligent officer suffered for years from violent attacks of cramp in the stomach. Tonics, sedatives, opiates, had been tried, but with slight benefit. He was told by a relative that there was a most effectual but dangerous medicine which should be given with his consent. Accordingly, on the first attack, a powder containing four grains of dried biscuit was administered every seven minutes, while the greatest anxiety was expressed lest too much should be given. The fourth dose caused an entire cessation of pain; it had never been relieved before in less than three hours. In

* "Homœopathy : its Tenets and Tendencies."

four subsequent attacks, the same remedy was attended with like success."

"A seaman suffered from attacks of constipation; the most powerful medicines were required for his relief. On a fifth attack, he took two grains of bread pill every seven minutes, much anxiety being expressed against an overdose. He soon became violently sick, as had been expected, and the cure was complete."

Instances are frequently brought forward by homœopathic patients of themselves or others being almost immediately relieved from headaches or other pains, sore throat, feverishness, and other not very serious symptoms, on the exhibition of an homœopathic remedy; the circumstance in these cases, as in some of those just quoted, is attributable either to the strong impression or expectation that relief will follow the administration of the globule, or else to the spontaneous subsidence of the symptoms after a short time. That the relief experienced is not the result of any special action of the remedy, is proved by the fact that in the majority of similar cases no effect is produced; impressionable individuals—who would be favourable subjects for the experiments of the electrobiologist—being usually most susceptible to be affected, and having been once relieved, to find the same symptoms subside after the exhibition of the same and sometimes after a different homœopathic medicament—globules said to contain a different substance being not unfrequently prescribed for the same ailment, and with a like effect; though

often it is not professed that these various substances are such as, if administered to healthy persons, would produce the headache, the sore throat, or other symptoms they are supposed to be capable of removing: so that, as we have seen, with some homœopathists, the doctrine of *similia similibus* is disregarded in prescribing; with others the practice of adhering to the infinitesimal doses is not considered an essential part of the system; and, nevertheless, both pretend to be equally successful in their treatment of disease. This abandonment of their principles by homœopathic practitioners, and the more frequent use made by them of allopathic remedies—some combining the two modes of practice—affords sufficient evidence that homœopathy is getting to be more justly appreciated by the public.

REMARKS ON HOMŒOPATHY.

THE letter of Sir B. Brodie, which recently appeared in "Frazer's Magazine," having elicited several replies from homœopathists and their advocates (which have been published in the papers and in separate pamphlets), appealing to the public, and presenting partial and one-sided views calculated to mislead, I deem it incumbent upon me to make a few additional remarks on the subject, with a view to controvert, if possible, the arguments which have been advanced by them.

The writer of the "Plea for Homœopathy," lately published in the "Times," quotes Hippocrates in favour of the law "*similia similibus curantur*," and adds—"Since his day, without the law itself being recognised, it has been continually acted upon more or less by all doctors. A small but rapidly increasing body have accepted it as their guiding principle in the administration of drugs, and have urged on the profession that its general adoption would vastly improve the practice of medicine. This proposition has met with an opposition for the virulence of which it is hard to account. Various schemes

have been tried to put down the obnoxious practice, and having failed, the notable scheme of getting up a strike against the irregular practitioners has been adopted."

In some exceptional instances, Hippocrates may have recommended remedies for the relief of symptoms which may be produced by the action of the substance in the normal state, but not its continued administration for the cure of a disease manifested by like symptoms. And in this respect practitioners have sometimes imitated his example, but do not, like homœopathists, seek to erect these rare exceptions into general rules, and consequently adopt a fallacy as their "guiding principle." In the vast majority of cases, the law "like cures like" is altogether untenable. Thus, to give an illustration, ipecacuanha in a sufficient dose will produce vomiting in a healthy subject, and in certain cases where vomiting arises from other causes, as from offending matter in the stomach, it may be advisable to give ipecacuanha, warm water, or any other emetic to remove the evident cause; but in a case of continued vomiting, no practitioner would think of exhibiting ipecacuanha in repeated doses. In like manner, a purgative is often advantageously prescribed in cases of diarrhœa, with the view of clearing the bowels from the offending matter that may have produced, and is perhaps keeping up, the disorder, which mostly ceases on the removal of the cause; but in a case of continued diarrhœa, no one but a homœopathist would go on giving even minute

doses of any substance that would produce this disease in a healthy person. It is true that, by attention to regimen, the disorder would probably subside after a longer or shorter time, but the case would be more protracted under a similar negative treatment than if efficient measures to check it were had recourse to at the outset; and in many instances it would assume an aggravated form from the non-employment of such measures; and yet, if the patient under homœopathic treatment should ultimately recover, the case would be set down as cured by the homœopathic remedies. The profession could not, therefore, adopt as a general principle one which is but rarely applicable; they have only acted consistently in opposing and disallowing such a fallacy in practice, and in refusing to meet in consultation those who advocate it, between whom and themselves there could be no common ground of accordance, without compromises which could not fail to be detrimental to the patient. The refusal of regular medical practitioners to meet homœopathists has been customary not only in England but in other countries. There is therefore no "getting up a strike" against irregular practitioners, nor, as the writer of the article in the "Chronicle" (Oct. 5th) says, "sending to a 'professional coventry' the very large proportion who have abandoned, upon conscientious grounds, the old modes of treatment, and who are in every respect the *equals in education and mental powers* of their medical brethren." "They declare," adds this writer, "that they will not meet

them in consultation at the bedside of the dying—that they will not render any medical aid, or offer any advice, when called upon to do so by distressed or weeping relatives. No matter whether life be saved or lost, the allopathic doctor is ordered by the Council to which he owes allegiance on no account to give a drug, to stir hand or tongue to arrest the approach of death. A more heartless resolution was never framed by any body of men. If the homœopathists were the most veritable set of quacks and empirics that ever deceived the world and flourished on the gullibility of mankind, it would not afford a sufficient excuse for visiting upon the innocent patient the wrath of the old practitioners.”

By similar appeals to the feelings, the conduct of the profession is most unjustly represented in an illiberal light. It must be evident that when a patient is brought into a dying state under homœopathic treatment, if the practitioner in attendance wishes for consultation with an allopathic physician, it could only be in order to relieve him from the responsibility of the fatal issue of the case; and as it is no less evident that any physician so called in would not sanction the continuance of the homœopathic medication, the homœopathist therefore must wholly subscribe to the plan he might recommend, and consequently there could be no occasion for his attendance. If, on the other hand, the family, feeling dissatisfied with the progress of the case under homœopathy, desire the advice of

an allopathic physician, they have only to dismiss the homœopathist, and he is ever ready to respond to their appeal.

The correspondent of the "Chronicle" catches at the observation of Sir B. Brodie that; if the arts of medicine and surgery had never been invented, by far the greater number of those who suffer from bodily illness would have recovered nevertheless, "as being a valuable corroboration of the proverbial saying 'that doctors kill more than they cure;'" and also at his statement, that "if any one were to engage in practice, giving his patients but a little distilled water, and enjoining a careful diet and a prudent mode of life otherwise, a certain number of his patients would perish from the want of further help, but more would recover," in order to draw the inference that patients need not "trouble the medical adviser until one is quite sure that something more ails him beyond that which *aqua pura* will remove."

The first position advanced by Sir B. Brodie is contrary to all medical experience, and would be disapproved by the profession in this and other civilised countries; and with regard to his second position, though it may be true that many patients affected by various ailments would ultimately recover if only distilled water were given, yet it may be fairly asked how much longer would they be in recovering, than if they were under a suitable mode of treatment, and what sort of recoveries would they be in the more serious cases? The long convalescence,

the general weakening of the constitution, and the consequent predisposition to a relapse or to the occurrence of other diseases which commonly happen under these circumstances (as witnessed in patients who were formerly treated in the French hospitals by the *medecine expectante*), will be a sufficient reply to these questions.

With regard to the admission of Sir B. Brodie, that he cannot comprehend the principle of "like cures like," and that it is wholly unintelligible, the writer remarks with some reason,—“In this respect Sir Benjamin’s opinion is therefore of no more value than that of any other educated man who is yet ignorant of a subject upon which he is asked for an opinion.” He then goes on to give some illustrations of the principle. “A person who has burnt his finger may test the value of the theory by holding the burnt part to the fire, which he will find the most rapid mode of cure. Arsenic, *it is said*, when given in small doses, produces disease very similar to eczéma, for the cure of which arsenic is prescribed by the doctors of the old school. Arsenic, *in certain quantities*, produces diarrhœa in the healthy subject; arsenic given to a person suffering from diarrhœa will remove the disease. Ipecacuanha, we are told, causes vomiting; the general practitioners give the drug to remove vomiting.” And so on.

Such statements may pass current with the uninformed portion of the community, but they in nowise tend to corroborate the theory sought to

be established. In a case of slight burn, the holding the part to the fire (which is not the application of an infinitesimal proportion of caloric) may alleviate the pain; but this is not the best remedy, nor the one which is usually employed, and cold applications (as scraped potato, &c.), would be found no less, if not more effectual in most instances; while in the more serious cases of burn, where the cuticle is destroyed, no practitioner would recommend the application of heat. Has the writer ever seen arsenic produce a disease similar to eczema? This drug is given in hundreds of cases without any such result occurring, and if an eruption on the skin does supervene on its improper exhibition, it is a very rare circumstance. Arsenic, when prescribed in eczema, often fails, and the disease is cured by other means. In accordance with this reasoning, because some kinds of shell-fish produce now and then in healthy persons a rash resembling scarlatina, a homœopathic dose of a similar substance would be the most appropriate remedy in this disease. Again, arsenic may, it is true, produce diarrhoea in conjunction with other symptoms, when *acting as a poison*, but this is not its usual effect, nor is it given to remove diarrhoea when arising from various causes; and if ordinary practitioners do sometimes give ipecacuanha to remove vomiting, it is, as I have already stated, in an emetic dose, with a view to get rid of the cause that may be keeping up the disorder.

Instances are adduced by homœopathists of the action of imponderable substances on the body in support of the action of the infinitesimal doses of drugs ; but the analogy does not hold good, for in the one case the same result almost invariably follows the operation of the cause, whereas, constant failure attends the administration of infinitesimal doses by unprejudiced practitioners, and when effects do ensue upon these doses, they are attributable to other circumstances than the positive action of the dose ; similar effects not unfrequently occurring after the exhibition of inert substances, when the patient is led to expect effects, and is not aware of what he is taking, or supposes it to be a homœopathic remedy. The cases of sick children becoming sometimes ameliorated after the exhibition of globules, and instances of veterinary homœopathy are brought forward in order to prove that the imagination can have no share in the improvement, but other causes may produce this result. All who have had much experience in the diseases of children, are aware of the frequent and often unlooked for changes that take place in the course of their diseases, irrespective of the remedies they may be taking ; and horses, when being treated homœopathically, in all probability abstain from work, and are otherwise properly attended to. The writer of one of the pamphlets, in reply to Sir B. Brodie—Dr. Drury—who, it appears, is one of the physicians of the homœopathic hospital in Great

Ormond Street, states, that his horse became affected with cough, discharge from the nostrils, and swelling of the glands beneath the jaw. He was induced to give sulph. 30th dilution, *under which* the cough got much better, and “following this with natrum muriaticum, all symptoms entirely disappeared. Before using those medicines I had *given some others without benefit.*” Query.—How long was the horse under treatment, and would *all* the medicines that were given without benefit, as well as those which were supposed to have effected the cure, produce analogous symptoms, if given in large doses to a healthy horse? I have stated in my work on Homœopathy, the results of experiments instituted in the veterinary school and hospital of Berlin, to ascertain the action of homœopathy on horses and dogs, on account of the assertion of a homœopathic veterinary doctor, that he had performed several surprising cures on those animals. “The experiments were conducted with the utmost exactness, and in the presence of many students and homœopathists, and though the cases were similar to those described by Dr. Luz, not one was cured, not one confirmed his statements, even in the slightest degree.”

The writer in the “Chronicle” quotes Dr. Ryan, with reference to homœopathy in the diseases of children, who says, “the minority committee in favour of introducing homœopathy into the Bellevue Hospital, New York, published its report” of the mortality in the New York asylums

during twelve years, from which it appears that at six city orphan asylums (allopathic), the mortality was 1 in 46; whereas at Protestant *half* orphan asylum (homœopathic), it amounted to only 1 in 146. Admitting that in this asylum, where it would doubtless appear on inquiry that infants and very young children are not received, or if received, are only in a very small proportion, the mortality may have been much smaller than the aggregate mortality of the other institutions, where children of all ages, abandoned by their parents, are received—many being diseased or in a sickly state when admitted—one is yet inclined to think that the report doth “protest too much.”

“In two institutions,” says Dr. Ryan, “where foundling and poor weakly orphans are admitted, viz., the *Nursery* (allopathic), and the Home for the Friendless (homœopathic), in four years the mortality was 1 in 17 in the former, and 1 in 40 in the latter. These are hard facts, and have not been controverted.” It would be easy to show that in all foundling hospitals and charitable institutions where very young children are received, the mortality is relatively large; and it may well be supposed that a *Nursery* would comprise a much greater proportion of such inmates than a homœopathic Home for the Friendless, where in all probability the great majority of those admitted are boys and girls of various ages, in whom the ratio of mortality is everywhere much less than in infants, or children under two or three years of age.

Dr. Ryan, as quoted in the "Chronicle," remarks that Sir B. Brodie "sets aside with the exclamation 'humbug!' the fact that *thousands of his professional brethren, his equals in education and mental powers*, have, through evil report, in all parts of the world, embraced the doctrines of Hahnemann. He is ignorant of, or ignores the *uncontroverted* statistics which more enlightened and fairer opponents (Dr. Routh) have acknowledged to be true."

As respects the assertion that there are *thousands of homœopathists* equal to Sir B. Brodie in *education and mental powers*, no comment is necessary, beyond the statement of the real fact, that though there are doubtless some who have adopted homœopathy from conscientious motives, there are many on the other hand who, failing to acquire practice in the ordinary way, have turned homœopathists, and that of the whole number there is not one that I ever heard of who had made any addition to the stock of scientific or professional knowledge, and but very few who had acquired any professional reputation—even though here and there one may have occupied a professor's chair in a university. Dr. Routh's account of the statistics have been referred to, to prove that the mortality in homœopathic hospitals is lower than that of allopathic hospitals. He remarks, however, with respect to the homœopathic hospital at Vienna—"They exclude moribund cases from their returns of cases admitted. This exclusion

makes of itself alone a difference occasionally of from from two to four per cent. on the mortality returns. These moribund patients are admitted in our allopathic returns, even though a patient be admitted but one hour before death." "I can state," he adds, "that the patients in Fleischmann's hospital are not the very poorest, but the better class of working mechanics and manufacturers, while the patients of the general allopathic hospitals are oftentimes the most wretched objects living."

Dr. Routh shows that the apparent low mortality in homœopathic institutions is owing to the above-mentioned and other circumstances, in no way connected with the method of treatment respectively adopted in them. "General hospitals have been usually established on benevolent grounds for the sole object of curing the sick, or of alleviating or retarding the course of those diseases where a cure was impracticable; they are for the most part open to all applicants who are poor, and whose cases are sufficiently severe, the slighter forms of disease being excluded in order that the beds may be occupied by cases of greater urgency; whereas homœopathic hospitals have been established with the special view, among others, of instituting a suppositious and favourable comparison between the results of homœopathic and ordinary practice." "The amount of mortality in an hospital is mainly dependent upon the relative severity, curability, and fatality of the diseases admitted. The mortality of general hospitals is always greatly increased by

the number of fatal or incurable diseases admitted ; while in a small hospital as Fleischmann's, the admissions, selections, and demissions of patients are solely under his own control and direction ; the corresponding mortality is, as we can prove, immensely diminished by admitting very few or no examples of those very fatal or incurable maladies. Thus, while among 6,369 Edinburgh hospital cases, 276 patients were labouring under consumption, only 98 consumptive cases were among the 6,500 individuals admitted into the homœopathic hospital. The same fact holds true of other serious diseases :—thus, of 6,000 and odd patients admitted into the general hospital of Edinburgh, and the homœopathic hospital of Vienna, there were of palsies 103 cases at Edinburgh, and only 5 at Vienna ; of organic disease of the heart, 159 cases at Edinburgh, 15 only at Vienna ; of organic disease of the liver, 33 cases at Edinburgh, 1 only at Vienna ; of Bright's disease of the kidney, 82 at Edinburgh, none at Vienna ; of diabetes, 17 cases at Edinburgh, none at Vienna ; of internal aneurisms, 18 at Edinburgh, 1 at Vienna ; of caries and necrosis, 57 at Edinburgh, 3 at Vienna ; of malignant cancerous tumours, 53 at Edinburgh, 9 at Vienna, &c.

Let us see, on the other hand, the proportion of several mild and non-fatal cases admitted at these two hospitals. At Edinburgh, among 6,000 hospital cases there were only 34 of inflammatory sore throat ; while among the 6,000 Vienna

homœopathic hospital cases there were no less than 301 of this affection. In the Edinburgh returns there are 2 cases, in the Vienna returns 110, of chicken-pox; in Edinburgh 1 of herpes or tetter, in Vienna 20 cases; 48 of chlorosis and amenorrhœa at Edinburgh, 90 at Vienna; 52 cases of influenza at Vienna, none in the Edinburgh returns," and so on.

Dr. Balfour, who gave an account of the homœopathic hospital at Vienna many years ago, in the "British and Foreign Medical Review," observed,—"The whole process of the admissions and discharge of patients is mysterious, most of those admitted have been previously visited at their homes by the assistant. I feel convinced that the great secret of Dr. Fleischmann's great seeming success, lies in the fact of the admissions and dismissals being uncontrolled, and there being no check upon the diagnosis. Homœopathic remedies are not exclusively trusted to, for Dr. Fleischmann uses cold applications to the head in delirium, and sometimes in headache; cold washings of the body in fevers; and in arthritis, cloths dipped in cold water surrounded by oil silk applied to the affected parts. He also has for constipation, clysters of warm water alone, or mixed with a little salt; and in diarrhœa, rice clysters. He told me that neither he nor any other homœopathist ever gave emetics or purgatives, and yet I heard his assistant order a woman a spoonful of oil. Dr. Fleischmann does not act upon the *similia similibus* principle—one drug serving for a great many diseases."

Pneumonia, as is well known, is a much less frequent disease than bronchitis. In the general hospital of Vienna, the cases of bronchitis admitted averaged about 7 per cent. of all diseases, the cases of pneumonia averaging about 2 per cent. But in Fleischmann's hospital, the cases of bronchitis reported as admitted are not 7 in 100, for they do not reach 1 per 100; while the cases of pneumonia reported as admitted, instead of being 2 per 100, are returned as $4\frac{1}{2}$ per 100 of the whole. "The review of those facts," says Dr. Routh, "admits but one of two inferences, the cases are either picked or selected, or the diagnosis is wrong,—cases of the milder disease, bronchitis, being officially returned as cases of the more severe and dangerous disease, pneumonia."

Dr. Gairdner, lecturer on the Practice of Medicine in Edinburgh, published a few years ago a pamphlet on this subject, in which he says, "I maintain, without fear of contradiction, that the homœopathic returns (of mortality) are not only without triumph to the system, but that they cover it with disgrace. With such a selection of cases they ought to have reduced their mortality to a far lower point than they have done."

"I saw the results in this place," he adds, "in the words of triumph, with which the publication of Fleischmann's statistics was hailed by the homœopaths all over Europe—'What a wonderful hospital,' said they, 'in which the total mortality is only $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and in which the mortality

of the several diseases is reduced to an inconsiderably small fraction.' To the first allegation, I answered that it would have been very dreadful indeed, if in an hospital in which sore throat and shingles, catarrh, dyspepsia, colic, headache, &c., were predominant diseases, the mortality had been otherwise very small; but I answered that it *was not very small*. And I further remarked, that I doubted whether there was any hospital in England or Scotland which admitted 5 per cent. of cases of common sore throat. Moreover, I thought that under these circumstances 6 per cent. was an enormous mortality, considering that in Canterbury the hospital mortality is 2 per cent.; in Cambridge 2·4 per cent.; and in Exeter 3·2 per cent. under the ordinary methods, and, it is to be presumed, without any selection of cases.

"To the second allegation. The small mortality of severe acute diseases in homœopathic hospitals, I answered, that the whole question was whether *those diseases were really severe*, and stated that the mere names given to them was no proof of their having been severe diseases, because every one acquainted with disease knows that the names given to its different forms are to a certain extent arbitrary, and that it is very possible to increase or diminish the number of cases of pneumonia, pleurisy, peritonitis, pericarditis, &c., as you choose, to interpret certain symptoms and physical signs which have a grave or trivial significance according to the form and manner of their co-relation. I

further stated that the enormous and incredible number of those diseases in the homœopathic returns was a proof to every reasonable mind, that Dr. Fleischmann's mode of viewing this subject was different from the common one;—that his pneumonia was not our pneumonia, his pericarditis not our pericarditis, and so on; but on the contrary, that he had swamped the cases of pneumonia, &c., as commonly so-called, into a host of minor ills that flesh is heir to; and that, in virtue of certain resemblances or analogies, such as homœopathists are too fond of following out (*similia similibus*), slight diseases were made to do duty in the returns for really severe diseases; just as in the entire hospital returns when compared with those of other hospitals, slight and trivial aggregates of disease were set against severe aggregates, without the least consideration of the elements of which these aggregates were composed.”*

To these observations I may add, that most of the cases I have seen in homœopathic institutions are of that class which would have been treated as out-patients in dispensaries and hospitals, or only admitted into the latter when there was plenty of room. Many of these patients are not confined to their beds, but are sitting up or walking about.

In Dr. Drury's pamphlet there is little that needs

* “Homœopathy and Homœopathic Hospitals.”—Edinburgh, A. and C. Black.

comment, beyond the case of his own horse already referred to, and his admission that as respects the infinitesimal doses, it is, in his opinion, not the substance itself that exerts any action when thus administered, but that some new, and hitherto dormant power is elicited by the shaking and trituration; "indeed," he says, "the medicines are given in quantities so small, that anything like matter acting on matter seems to be out of the question." Each drug, he adds, has a peculiar ELECTRIC action of its own, which is developed by the shaking or trituration.*

Dr. Drury is willing that an allopathic physician should be called in to meet a homœopath, to discuss the nature of a patient's disease, and states that we (homœopathists) are glad to have the advantage of his opinion in obscure cases in aid of our own, but

* "Homœopathy and its Opponents,"—a reply to Sir B. Brodie and others.

Hahnemann states in his "Organon," that "the homœopathic medicament acquires an extraordinary degree of power by the friction or the shock imparted to it as a means of developing the inherent powers of medicines, and which is so energetic, that of late, experience has obliged me to *shake the mixture only twice*, whereas formerly I prescribed ten shakes to each dilution."

Dr. Balfour in his report of Homœopathy in Vienna, states that "one practitioner often contents himself with allowing the patient to smell the remedy, waiting patiently for some weeks or so for the completion of the cure, not even permitting a second smell." Hahnemann sometimes made patients smell a *dried dicillioth* globule, and sometimes dissolved a globule or two in water and spirits, and made the patient hold his nose over the solution. The editor of the "Pharmaceutical Journal," says, "we have heard of a lady who having been subjected to this process, passed the fee before the doctor's nose and then replaced it in her pocket."—*Dr. Simpson's work on Homœopathy.*

as regards treatment, that must, where we are the regular attendants, *remain in our hands*. If allopathic physicians decline to meet homœopathists at all in consultation, what would be the professional reputation of one who would be found to meet them on such conditions. Dr. Drury goes back as far as 1853 for a case, which is that of a child, three years old, who had a *pulmonary affection*, marked by a cough, and difficult, noisy breathing. "Finding no time was to be lost," he prescribed aconite, 30th dilution, nevertheless the disease progressed and "spongia was indicated." In addition, however, *fomentation of hot water was applied to the throat* and some amelioration ensued. "I always use it," says Dr. Drury, "when there is suspicion of croup—resorted to early, it often, I believe, acts most beneficially." The symptoms however, recurred, and arsenicum was alternated with spongia and hepar sulphuris. *Cela va sans dire*, that the child recovered, otherwise, it is scarcely likely the case would have been recorded; but it may be asked, would either the fomentation, or any, or all of the homœopathic remedies employed, if given in large quantities, have induced analogous symptoms in a healthy child? If not, how reconcile the practice with the theory of *similia similibus* in this case?

Dr. Sharp's "Tracts on Homœopathy," have been referred to by homœopathists, as also by himself, as containing unanswerable arguments in favour of the doctrine. The author makes considerable display of erudition, by quotations which are not often very

relevant to the subject, but doubtless leave a great impression upon some of his readers as to his learning; and as he appends F.R.S. to his name (though I am not aware of any additions that he has made to science which would justify such an appendage), he requires a more lengthened notice.* The twelve tracts were published between 1853 and 1856, the author respectfully invites his professional brethren to give them their candid consideration. Without accepting the confraternity, I have endeavoured to do so, and I see nothing in them but what is easily explained or refuted. They are manifestly addressed to the general public, for it is not likely that any practitioner who was desirous of submitting his opinions to be appreciated by his "professional brethren," would publish them in the form of twopenny tracts. Dr. Sharp repudiates the works of Hahnemann. "They are" he says, "so filled with unproved assertions, illogical arguments, fanciful speculations, and obvious contradictions, as to render them to me exceedingly distasteful writings."

In illustration of the principle "like cures like," he adduces, as instances, the action of belladonna, which, when swallowed *as a poison*, produces a scarlet rash, sore throat, and headache, all which symptoms appear in scarlet fever. It is therefore inferred that belladonna is, in homœopathic doses, the most fitting remedy in scarlet fever, which,

* In the Medical Directory, Dr. S.'s qualifications are M.D., Lambeth, late Senior Surgeon to Bradford Infirmary, F.G.S., Fellow Royal Medical Society.

however, in the great majority of cases is well cured by ordinary practitioners by various other means ; and there are but few who would have recourse to belladonna in this disease.

“ Sulphur,” says Dr. Sharp, “ produces an eruption on the skin, as those who frequent baths like Harrogate well know. It is notorious as a remedy for similiar affections.” In the exceptional instances in which an eruption would be produced by the Harrogate baths, this effect is not attributable to the sulphurous principle in the waters, for a like result, the *pouseé*, as it is termed, not unfrequently ensues after strongly impregnated mineralised baths, not sulphurous ; in many cases it depends upon the baths having been taken at too high a temperature. The preparations of sulphur or sulphurous waters when taken internally, do not occasion eruptions on the skin, though they are often employed for their removal.

Again, “ if twenty grains of ipecacuanha will make a strong man sick, and *if* the twentieth part of a grain will cure a sick man of his vomiting, we have two cases which may be fairly compared.” The twentieth part of a grain of this drug will not cure vomiting, the vomiting in most cases would cease if nothing were given, though its cessation might be wrongly ascribed to the homœopathic dose, if such had been administered. “ *If* an inconceivably small quantity or an infinitesimal dose of ipecacuanha can produce the symptoms of catarrh or of asthma, so *severe as to threaten the loss of life*, and *if* similarly

small doses can cure similar and equally violent symptoms when arising from other causes, the trial must be carried into these much ridiculed but highly interesting regions." "There is," says Shakspeare, "great virtue in your if." Who has ever seen an infinitesimal dose of ipecacuanha produce symptoms of catarrh so severe as to threaten the loss of life? and who has ever seen it cure such symptoms? "Ipecacuanha," further states Dr. Sharp, "causes bleeding in different parts of the body in previously healthy persons." If Dr. Sharp has ever seen this result of ipecacuanha, I think it may be safely asserted that he stands alone in this respect. This medicament is daily administered in various doses; but I am not aware of any instance being recorded of its producing bleeding. "Cases of hemorrhage," adds Dr. Sharp, "are cured by ipecacuanha." What cases? Ipecacuanha is one of the last means that practitioners would have recourse to for arresting hemorrhage, unless in some exceptional case where a revulsive action might be sought from its effect in producing vomiting. Dr. Sharp, however, avers that he has had "some opportunities of observing that ipecacuanha in such small doses, as did not produce any sickness, could arrest hemorrhage, even when life was fast ebbing away." What proof is there that the cessation of the hemorrhage was owing to the small doses of ipecacuanha in these cases? Would not any impartial practitioner conclude that this result depended upon the faintness occasioned by

the loss of blood, as is commonly the case under such circumstances, and as is not unfrequently seen in flooding after child-birth? To prove the action of infinitesimal quantities of ponderable matter upon the healthy body, Dr. Sharp adduces the instance of the serious effects produced by the poison of serpents; but as I have endeavoured to show with regard to imponderable substances, that the analogy between their almost invariable action, and the supposed effects of infinitesimal doses of medicaments, does not hold good, so is it, likewise, in this instance. Extremely minute portions of certain substances do, it is true, occasionally produce very marked effects, owing to the prevalence of particular idiosyncrasies, of which every experienced practitioner could cite examples. Some people, it is well known, can tell from their sensations when a cat is in the room, though no one else would be aware of the circumstance; and Dr. Sharp need not have gone so far back as 1787 and 1809 for cases in which such idiosyncrasy was manifested, with respect to ipecacuanha giving rise to sneezing, which he quotes from a medical journal of that date. Analogous instances are, it is true, of unfrequent occurrence, but not quite so rare as this retrospect would imply. In the same tract (No. 4) several cases are given as treated homœopathically. I extract two of the shortest which may serve as a specimen of the rest. In three cases out of four of warts on the hands, Dr. Sharp effected a cure by *internal treatment alone, with infinitesimal doses.*

The time required is, however, not stated. Everybody has heard of warts being removed solely by the impression upon the imagination that such result would ensue from *charming* them away.

A lady had partial paralysis of the thumb, which had existed for *some time*; she could not hold a needle and was otherwise ailing. Dr. Sharp, considering the case to bear some analogy with paralysis produced by the effect of lead in house-painters, and acting upon the principle "like cures like," prescribed the billionth of a grain of lead in *occasional doses for a month*, at the expiration of which period she was *rather better*. The same plan was continued for *two months longer*, when one day Dr. Sharp called, and found her engaged in sewing, and looking so much better that he hardly knew her. Of course the cure was set down to the amount of the billionth part of a grain of lead *taken occasionally*, and not to the general improvement in the patients health that had taken place in the course of the four months. The probability is, that by a different treatment, as slight stimulation by electricity or otherwise, the local paralysis would have been cured in a fortnight or sooner.

"It is objected," says Dr. Sharp (Tract 5 p. 7), "that the symptoms produced by these poisons when taken in health, and said to be similar to those symptoms in disease for which they act as remedies are not *invariably* produced; for instance, that belladonna does not *always* produce symptoms resembling scarlet fever, or that mercury does not

always produce salivation or ulceration of the throat. No one ever asserted that they did, nor is it at all required for the truth of homœopathy that they should. If they have *ever* unequivocally done so, it proves that they are capable of producing them, which is all that homœopathy requires." In laying down a principle in science, it is always understood that it applies to results in general, and not merely to very rare and exceptional cases ; and this is what homœopathists would have it inferred from their statements, viz., that such or such substances are capable of producing generally, special symptoms in healthy persons. When Hahnemann experimented upon himself with bark, and found it produced symptoms resembling ague (doubtless from the effect of his attention being concentrated upon the result which he anticipated), he did not wish it to be thought that he deduced his conclusion respecting the remedial action of this drug merely from the effect which he noted upon himself, but he gave out as a principle that bark would commonly give rise to similar symptoms if administered to healthy subjects ; in the experiments, however, which have been made to test this assertion, nothing of the kind was observed.* The same may be said of several other substances which

* Dr. Sharp remarks (Tract 11) that "a second defect of Hahnemann's provings of medicaments, has arisen from his *anxiety to give a perfect picture of the effects* produced by the substance, and consists in his having suffered a large mass of insignificant, and often, perhaps, imaginary sensations, and other trivial matters to mingle with the real and important symptoms." The provings which Hahnemann gives us of belladonna contain 1440 symptoms.

have been alleged to produce particular symptoms in healthy individuals.

Dr. Sharp, like some other homœopathic writers, compares the mortality of the homœopathic hospital of Vienna with that of general hospitals, reproducing the statistics to which I have already referred, and to which it is needless to revert. He likewise brings forward as a proof of the superiority of the homœopathic treatment, the alleged inferior mortality of cholera in the homœopathic hospitals of Vienna and in Hanover Square. It is not very likely that during the prevalence of such an epidemic the most serious cases would be taken to a homœopathic institution ; and even supposing that all were cholera cases that were stated to be such, the lower mortality in this disease would prove nothing as to the generally superior treatment of acute disease by homœopathy, for it is well known that among practitioners there was no definite plan or principle acted upon, and that a variety of remedies were tried empirically, with but little success in the graver cases. In the general hospital at Vienna, I believe the most successful treatment of cholera was by the repeated exhibition of small lumps of ice allowed to dissolve gradually in the mouth, which practice can scarcely be considered as going much beyond the *medecine expectante*.

In the 7th Tract a case of overdrugging is given. The patient, who suffered chiefly from nervousness, had mercury, hyoscyamus, digitalis, &c., administered to him in large doses, and got worse. "He

was three months in bed under treatment of two physicians—emaciated, pulse 140, head confused, bilious diarrhœa; the mercury and digitalis were continued with the addition of belladonna in large doses. Besides these remedies, he was likewise prescribed capsicum, columba, ammonia, opium, valerian, camphor, sulphuric acid, quinine, ether, asafoetida, colocynth, nitric acid, dandelion, prussic acid, hop, poppy, cod-liver oil, rhubarb, aconite, Epsom salts, &c., in the order here stated, together with various salines and infusions.” “What could I do?” asks Dr. Sharp. He did what most sensible practitioners would have done—viz., advised the patient to try to take some food, and to abstain from all medicine for a week, at the end of which time he was a little better. “I prescribed sulphur for him,” adds Dr. Sharp, “and *in about two months, by attention to diet*, and by taking a few doses of nux vomica, sulphur, nitric acid, and cinchona, I had the pleasure of leaving my patient quite well.” Is it not pretty certain that the patient would have equally recovered at the expiration of the two months had the homœopathic doses of these substances not been given? It is in cases like the above-mentioned that the introduction of homœopathy and hydropathy into England has been of some service, by leading to the cessation of the too active medication, and regulating the diet and regimen, &c. Instances of overdrugging to a considerable extent are, however, comparatively rare at the present day.

Homœopathists, like the advocates of all the heterodox systems, and of nostrums which have been more or less in vogue, and afterwards laid aside, appeal to their so-termed facts, and charge the medical profession with declining to investigate them and wilfully closing their eyes to the truth. They adduce the instances of Harvey, Jenner, and other benefactors to humanity, who met with opposition and ridicule in their day, as exemplifying the opposition the introduction of scientific truths is likely to meet with ; but the fact is, that there is too great a proneness on the part of medical men to try new remedies and plans of treatment ; hence we see so many succeeding each other in the course of a quarter of a century. "One of the prominent faults of the medical profession in the nineteenth century," says Dr. Hooker, "is, that it is, as a body, too fond of new things, and too much disposed to receive them upon doubtful evidence. There is a great disposition to hail every new remedy with enthusiasm. The annals of medicine are burdened with false statements in regard to the effects of remedies. Many have been announced with much flourish, and have been extensively used for a time, but the confidence which has been put in them has been proved in most instances to be misplaced."*

Homœopathy has not been rejected by the profession from the foregone conclusion, to which the absurdity and inconsistency of its principles naturally lead. It has been repeatedly tried in various

* "Physician and Patient," edited by Dr. Bentley.

countries, both by individuals and by commissioners appointed by royal or imperial order, or by medical bodies, and has invariably been found to fail. M. Andral, one of the most distinguished physicians of Paris, who is well known to be an acute observer of disease, and willing to give an impartial trial to whatsoever means are proposed where there is a likelihood of any benefit resulting, allowed a hundred and thirty patients in the hospital La Pitié to be healed homœopathically under his superintendence, and in the presence of numerous witnesses. The regimen recommended by Hahnemann was strictly adhered to, and the prescriptions were prepared by a homœopathic chemist. The experiments were of two kinds. First, to ascertain whether symptoms can be produced in healthy persons by substances which cure similar symptoms when arising from other causes. Bark was one of the first substances chosen, and its various preparations were taken by M. Andral himself, and by ten other persons, at first in homœopathic doses, which produced no effect, then in ordinary doses, which were gradually increased up to from six to twenty-four grains of sulphate of quinine per day. None of these persons experienced the least symptom of an attack of intermittent fever; the only effects produced by the large doses were slight indisposition and headache in some whose stomachs were not so strong as the rest. Aconite, which, according to the homœopaths, is of such superior efficacy in febrile diseases, was tried, and produced no feverish symptoms. Sulphur

was also tried by several persons, without any eruption being produced on the skin.

Thus the statement that remedies cause diseases resembling those which they cure is an assertion utterly groundless.

The second kind of experiments was made to ascertain whether homœopathic remedies would in any case affect the progress of disease.

Several cases of intermittent fever were treated homœopathically. Some got well at the end of a certain period, which in all probability would have been the case had no remedies been employed. In other cases no effect was produced, and on the usual method of treatment being adopted, the patients got rapidly well. Similar results were obtained in treating febrile diseases, and several chronic complaints, except that in some cases the patients got worse while under the homœopathic system.*

These trials were considered at the time to be pretty conclusive, and are so still by all unprejudiced persons, though homœopaths attempt to disprove them. They are designated by Dr. Sharp as being "ignorantly and disingenuously made," and, "as a trial of homœopathy, insignificant and valueless."

Letussee, however, the reply made by the Academie

* M. Andral said, in the Academie de Medecine, he had taken aconite without experiencing symptoms of plethora. Sulphur he took to see if he could catch the itch, but he caught nothing, and so with various other substances. With regard to attempts to cure disease by this method, he was in every instance obliged to return to allopathy, as under the homœopathic treatment the symptoms went on from bad to worse.

de Medecine to the Minister of the Interior, who had requested the opinion of that learned body respecting homœopathy. "The time of the Academy has been repeatedly taken up with the subject, and, moreover, *there are but few of its members who have not sought to ascertain its basis and its effects.* With us, as elsewhere, homœopathy has been subjected in the first place to logical examination, which has exhibited in it a formal opposition to the best established truths ; a great number of striking contradictions, which inevitably ruin all false systems in the opinion of enlightened persons, but which are not always a sufficient obstacle to the cordiality of the multitude.

"With us, as elsewhere, homœopathy *has been subjected to the trial of facts and put to the test of experience.* Observation, faithfully interrogated, has furnished the most categorical answers, for, if it be admitted that some instances of recovery have occurred in patients under the homœopathic treatment, it has been ascertained that the success is justly attributable to the basis of a weak imagination on the one hand, and to the remedial powers of the constitution on the other. Observation has also shown the great danger of homœopathy in serious cases of disease where the physician may do as much harm by inactive measures as of those which are directly prejudicial.

"Both reason and experience are consequently agreed to repel a similar doctrine, and counsel that it be left to itself and to its own resources."

After making several judicious remarks upon

the prevalence of quackery, Dr. Hooker further observes:—"We are prepared from the preceding facts and considerations to see in what way quackery in its various forms has obtained such a hold upon the community. If results in medical treatment could always be traced to their true causes, there would be no room for the arts of the empiric. It is the erroneous reference of effects to causes which is the great source of quackery. Let us see how this result is produced. Take any remedy, no matter what, whether it be positive in its operation or wholly inert, and it can be made to acquire an extensive reputation for curing disease. Suppose that it is of a positive character, and let a large number of persons be persuaded to take it. It would be appropriate to a few out of the whole number of cases. Then there are some who, through the renewing power of nature, get well whilst using the medicine, perhaps even in spite of it, and falsely attribute the cure to it. The many that are not benefited soon give up the use of it, and the fact that they have taken it is known to a few, and soon forgotten even by them. But the few that chance to derive benefit from it, or that are cured by nature while taking it, proclaim everywhere the virtues of the remedy; the newspapers teem with flaming advertisements; the consequence is, that the remedy comes into extensive use, and continues in popular favour till some other remedy by the same process supplants it. And what is remarkable is, that when once a remedy has passed from popular favour, no

matter how great its fame has been, it can never be revived unless under a new name and with new pretensions.

“One of the most seductive quackeries of the day is homœopathy. We see occasionally, but only occasionally, effects from agents in the treatment of disease which seem to have their explanation in the principle that one disease is cured by temporarily creating another similar to it (senna for colic, rhubarb for diarrhœa, &c.) Hahnemann fixed his eye upon these few facts; his mind became filled with the one idea which he there saw, and he was soon blind to everything else. Losing then his mental equilibrium, he fell into error precisely in the same way that thousands have done before him.”

After mentioning some of the causes which tended to make homœopathy popular, this author proceeds. “The facility with which people are imposed upon in their attempts to estimate the comparative merits of modes of practice by their results is another cause of the popularity of homœopathy. Most persons have an opportunity of witnessing but a limited range of facts in medical practice, altogether too limited to enable them to arrive at any just conclusion. Yet these limited observations are reported abroad among the community, and become the boasted facts by which homœopathy, like every other delusion, has gained its popularity.

“It is not, therefore, to be wondered at that homœopathy has acquired extensive favour with the

public, and that many sensible persons have been captivated with it, for the evidence upon which they base their preference is so limited and loose, that it is calculated to mislead any who rely upon it. If they will examine carefully the evidence upon which the success of homœopathy is so confidentially asserted, they will find it insufficient and deceptive.

“It is a curious fact, but one worthy of remark, that those who are most shrewd and judicious in all worldly matters, and who entertain a high opinion of education, often put the quack of a day on a level with the accreditied physician laden with the carefully-gathered experience of years, or perhaps even above him, and welcome with open arms the advocate of some new system for the moment in high favour, with scarcely any regard to the inquiry whether he has been educated in a proper manner for the responsible post into which he has thrust himself. Many a man of fair address and a good show of cunning, with but a smattering of medical knowledge, has dubbed himself a physician, and adopting homœopathy or some other system just then in fashion, has imposed not only upon the ignorant, but even the intelligent and learned.*

* Last year I met in a hotel a retired writer for the press, who stated that he subsequently reproached himself with the getting up of a work on homœopathy for a man whom he designated as excessively ignorant professionally, and who was scarcely able to string half-a-dozen sentences together, but yet of tolerable address and plausible manners, who acquired a large practice in consequence, and was presented to the Queen Dowager, to whom he offered a copy. All the cases were of pure invention.

“This ought not to be the case. The public should, one and all, feel that they are personally interested in upholding a well-educated medical profession. Here is a science which is confessedly difficult above all others, and in which careless observation is peculiarly liable to error. How important then, that those who take charge of your health, your life, should be careful and skilful observers. Education is obviously as much needed to form good habits of observation in this as it is in other sciences ; but whenever you give countenance to quackery, whether it be in the shape of a secret nostrum or a fashionable system, you strike a blow at the standard of medical education : in fact, you say to the physician ‘ observe, watch, study as much as you will, we esteem all your labour and experience vain.’ When men of wisdom and influence do thus, as they often do, it certainly casts contempt upon education, and therefore tends to lower its standard in the profession. For, if physicians see that they can acquire the esteem of the public without study and labour, many will be disposed to give them up and take the easier path to success to which they are thus invited.” *

Homœopathists, hydropathists, advocates of any special system of treatment or of nostrums for particular diseases, all cry up the method or remedy to which they have attached themselves as being all in all, giving only favourable cases in their publications, and they are often misrepresented or

* Op. Cit. : Chapter on Quackery.

highly coloured, while nothing is said about the numerous cases which have derived no benefit or have become worse under the treatment.

“The accounts which empirics give of the cases under their care,” adds Dr. Hooker, “are commonly misrepresentations. They have ordinarily very little regard for truth, the object of most of them being to make the credulity of the public subserve their pecuniary interest. They are accordingly very loose in their relicts of disease, and often represent things to be alike which have no real resemblance to each other. So when any epidemic is prevalent they represent many as having it when their ailment is nought but a common cold or a disordered stomach, and so get the credit with some people of having cut short a disease, which, under the care of educated skill, cannot be prevented from going through its natural course.

“It is manifest that misrepresentations thus made by empirics, must add much to the difficulty of judging of the comparative success of different remedies and modes of practice. Another obstacle to the formation of a just estimate of comparative success in medical practice, is proved in the influence of bad treatment upon cases in which the disease is small in amount and mild in its character. While the judicious physician cures all such cases so readily that they excite no general interest, the empiric makes bad cases of some of them, and yet they are apt to end in recovery, although they appear to be of so grave a character; for a case

which has become bad by improper treatment is not commonly in as dangerous a condition as one that has become bad in spite of good treatment.

“As the community are not thus apt to discriminate, it is easy to see how the injudicious physician and the quack often get the credit of success in their management of apparently grave cases, when in fact they need never have been of this character. The ignorant practitioner often suffers disease to establish itself, and thus makes a long case, though ordinary skill would at once have succeeded in breaking up the attack; and yet when the patient at last recovers, he may be applauded throughout a whole community as having raised the sick man almost from the dead. On this point the public often give a wrong verdict in their estimate of success.

“But let us look beyond the results which occur during the progress of disease, and examine those which appear after recovery has taken place. When one recovers after injudicious practice, his system is not apt to be in a good state, his convalescence is not a clear one, and his recovery is not full and complete. Perhaps his vital energies are impaired, and his constitution has received an unnecessary injury from which it may never wholly recover. Perhaps some bad chronic ailment is left behind, which, though it may trouble him but slightly for a long time, may yet be the germ of some future disease. Such a state of things is not inconsistent with a tolerable condition of

health, even when there may be such disease as will bring him to a bed of sickness or to death.

“These remote consequences of bad practice are the more certain to occur, if the patient go on after recovery to administer medicines to himself according to his own whims or those of others. Many tedious cases of this kind fall at length under the care of the physician from the hands of quacks, who are thus often spared from witnessing the results of their ignorance and imposture, as from bearing in the estimation of the public any responsibility in relation to them.

“There is no question of the fact that there is generally a much larger amount of sickness from year to year in families that employ unskilful physicians or empirics, than there is in those who are under the care of skilful practitioners. And though the public cannot discriminate accurately between individual cases in regard to this point, they can see the evidence of this general fact, especially in comparing good practice with gross quackery.”*

To sum up the points in which the practice of the really skilful physician differs in its results from that of the injudicious practitioner and the quack:—

1. He has a less fatal number of cases in proportion to the whole number of those that come under his care.

2. He has a less number of bad cases, because he avoids converting light cases into grave ones,

* Chapter on Good and Bad Practice.

and succeeds in arresting disease in many cases in its very commencement.

3. His patients have commonly shorter sickness.

4. They are in a better condition after they have recovered, less apt to have bad results left behind, and less liable to disease in future.

5. He has a less number of patients and a smaller amount of sickness in the same number of families.

Time, which has destroyed so many errors, is the best test of truth or falsehood; and the result has proved that the opinion expressed by the Academie de Medecine with respect to homœopathy, that it should be left to itself and its own resources, was most judicious; for it has of late years been gradually declining in France and other continental states, with the exception, perhaps, of those less advanced in civilization, as Spain. In some places where it was at one time greatly in vogue, it is now comparatively little heard of; its practitioners being reduced to one, two, or three, where there were formerly many. "The Journal of Homœopathy" stated in 1856, "In Germany and on the continent generally, homœopathy has by no means made the progress it ought to have done. In lively America it flourishes most." Two years later the "Lancet" remarked (June, 1858) "the homœopathic heresy in the land of its birth is already a by-word and a jest, and it will not be long before the English people will treat it as a delusion and a snare."

Even when homœopathy was in full vogue many years ago at the time of my visit to Leipsic, the

house-physician to the homœopathic hospital, who could have entered upon its practice under the fairest auspices, after having held the appointment for several months, gave it up and published an account of the cases treated in the institution, clearly proving that the so-called cures were recoveries from ailments more or less severe by the efforts of nature: the cases being, as he alleged, frequently a long time under treatment, whereas by suitable medication at the outset, they might in most instances have been speedily cured. He also showed that many of the more serious cases became aggravated for want of efficient treatment.* Here, then, is a direct corroboration by one who had a favourable bias to homœopathy, and who had ample opportunities of observation, of the validity of the conclusions arrived at by medical bodies, and by individuals who have impartially tested the truth or falseness of homœopathy.†

* “*Über die Nichtigkeit der Homœopathie.*”—“On the Nothingness of Homœopathy.”—Leipsic, 1841.

† The following extract is from a notice in the “*Athenæum*” (October 26th) on Dr. C. Holland’s new work on homœopathy:—“In its audacious assertions, its unphilosophical spirit, and its unsparing attacks on the successful cultivators of practical medicine, it has no rival but the ‘*Novum Organon*’ of the empiric Hahnemann. The three great elements which seem to contribute to the production of a homœopathic practitioner are, want of success in legitimate practice, the absence of habits of inductive inquiry, and an overweening confidence in the results of their limited experience; and every page of Dr. Holland’s work testifies to these conditions. Dr. H. is a devout believer in the absurd and unreasonable dogma, that ‘like cures like,’ and in the potency of infinitesimal remedies. To reason with men who have thus deliberately given up the exercise of their mental powers is impossible.”

That the system has been on the wane of late years in this country, is also proved by the circumstance, that several years ago two public dinners for the benefit of homœopathic institutions were given in London on the same day, at which many titled and influential persons were present. On this occasion the subscriptions amounted to £3,100. One of these hospitals has long ceased to exist, and the subscriptions to the surviving one, as also to homœopathic dispensaries, are no longer liberally forthcoming; appeals for aid, which is said to be urgently needed, being constantly made by advertisement.*

Let us, however, turn to America, where, according to the journal referred to, homœopathy flourished in 1853. This is not to be wondered at; the state of medical organisation is there, as in Great Britain, very imperfect; the medical practice is not very dissimilar to our own; and quackery is extremely prevalent, perhaps as much so as with us. Nevertheless, homœopathy has been gradually falling into disuse in the United States, as I was informed some time ago by a gentleman who had good opportunities of knowing; and of late there have been pretty strong indications of this decline from many homœopathic practitioners abandoning their principles of treatment, and exhibiting medicines frequently according to the *contraria contrariis*

* The "Homœopathic Journal" stated, in 1856, that the hospital was ineffectual from the smallness of its income; the number of beds not exceeding twenty.

principle, and in anything but homœopathic doses, as also (like rats leaving a shaky house) from the public renunciation of some homœopaths, and the attempts to resume the regular practice of medicine under collegiate sanction. Thus Dr. Peters, who was the editor of the "North American Journal of Homœopathy," the leader of homœopathy in the United States, and author of works on the subject, wrote a letter to the "American Medical Times" (August 7th, 1861), of which the following passages are extracts:—

"I must say that I have never been a convert to the use of infinitesimal doses, they have been so repugnant to every fraction of common sense which I possess, that I have always felt absolutely degraded when making, what I considered to be, necessary trials with them. I have always felt that I was doing something foolish or wrong when giving them—that I was dealing with quantities so minute and powerless, that it would be trifling with the lives of my patients to depend upon them in serious cases, and with their time and comfort in minor attacks.

"I know full well that Hahnemann had performed all his first cures with tangible doses, and had cited numerous cases from reliable medical authorities, in which apparently homœopathic cures had been effected with not unreasonably small doses. I have been more and more successful in strict proportion as I gradually increased upon the very small quantities which I first used. The reports

of others, both physicians and patients, frequently led me to make careful trials with infinitesimal doses, but never with satisfactory success, while many extraordinary recoveries from disease in which no medicine had been given, and numerous consultations to which I was called by homœopathic physicians, in which severe disease had gone on unchecked by those powerless agents, more and more convinced me that they were irrational and unsafe. The dogma, *similia similibus*, was long a stumbling block to me, it seemed so utterly opposed to reason, that it was often with difficulty that I could force myself to practise according to it. But many years ago *I hit upon an explanation* which was, and is still perfectly satisfactory to me—similarity is a hybrid consisting of a great or a greater degree of resemblance, coupled with a less or lesser amount of difference—in fact, similarity may be looked upon as a slight degree of difference, quite as well as interpreting it as a great degree of resemblance. Hence the homœopathic law is only an apparent or fragmentary truth, not a complete exhaustive law. It is a fragment of the great law *differentia differentiis curantur*, of which its form the old established law, *contraria contrariis*, is another fragment.”

Again he writes in the same journal (October 5), “I am now prepared to prove that almost every apparent homœopathic cure can be explained away, and that the ordinary laws which have regulated the real practice of medicine in all ages will hold

true, even in cases in which the resemblance between the drug-action and the disease-action may seem so close as to appear identical.

“I have not used them (infinitesimal doses) for many years, and never intend to try them again ; I have seen enough of the trials of others.

“In conclusion, I will simply express the hope, that in a future, and I hope no very distant time, all exclusive systems of medicine will be regarded in the same light as universal panaceas, for all the ills flesh is heir to justly are. The latter are the follies of ignorant men or quacks, the former are often the mistakes of otherwise learned but too enthusiastic and ambitious men.”

A correspondent of the same journal remarks with reference to this letter, “It seems strange that Dr. Peters has not made this renunciation before ; now that homœopathy is upon its last legs, and is getting to be considered by the public as it always has been by the honest, intelligent part of our profession, as an artful imposture and transcendant humbug, it requires no great sacrifice of feeling and interest to cast it aside, and with an apology, such as it is, endeavour to gain a status in the profession he has done so much to disparage and to misrepresent.

“It is very obvious that with Dr. Peters, as with many others, homœopathy was a foregone conclusion ; it was popular fashionable, profitable ; it gave a young man a start ; it required no study, only writing down and comparing symptoms as found in books,

and met with in disease. This required no thought, was indeed an agreeable amusement, well suited for fanciful, speculative, indolent minds, given to transcendental notions, and weak enough to construe the abuses of medicine and the failures of individual practitioners, as legitimate reasons why the entire science of rational medicine should be rejected.

“Dr. Peters may be a man of ability, but he is certainly not a very careful or logical reasoner, and it is not creditable to his intelligence that it has taken him twenty years to discover the absurdities and fallacies of homœopathy.

“Homœopathy has had its day, played out its role, and now retires to make way for some fresher humbug. Its doctrines have become stale, its practice unprofitable ; its votaries having ridden their hobby to death, now hope to gain a respectable status in the regular cavalry. As one of the privates in this grand army, I must protest against their admission ; they have brought too much injury and disgrace upon a noble profession ; they should, like other deserters to the enemy, be made an example of.” “Three other homœopathic practitioners of New York,” says the “Philadelphia Reporter,” “emulating the example of Dr. Peters, have published over their signatures in the ‘American Medical Times,’ a renunciation of their faith in the doctrines propounded by Hahnemann.”

Another correspondent of the last-named journal (September 27th), a quondam homœopathist remarks, that what twenty years before, when visiting

the homœopathic hospitals of Leipsic and Vienna, he supposed to be cures, he now believes to have been merely recoveries by the efforts of nature. He further observes, that at Berlin, the small homœopathic hospital was soon after his arrival closed by order of the government, *as the result of the treatment was so unsuccessful.*"

§ The great prevalence of irregular practice in England, and the support given to quackery, especially by the upper classes, are owing to other causes besides the greater degree of credulity that is ascribed to the English public. A principal cause which is too commonly overlooked, is attributable, as I have elsewhere endeavoured to prove, to the very imperfect state of our medical organisation.* Owing to this cause, while the community has been inundated with medical practitioners to an extent far beyond its requirements, a large proportion have been but indifferently qualified for the duties which devolve upon them, being brought up for the most part to attend too exclusively to surgery, whereas the surgical cases met with in ordinary practice are comparatively few. Hence the study of internal pathology has been too much neglected, and the public have consequently not unfrequently had reason to be dissatisfied with the results of the attendance of the "regular practitioner." It need not, therefore, occasion surprise, that many should have had recourse to the various forms of quackery, or to the panaceas for special

* "The Medical Profession in Great Britain and Ireland."

diseases, which are so incessantly obtruded upon their notice by means of the journals, and for the suppression of which penal enactments would be of little avail.

The "Medical Critic and Psychological Journal" (October, 1861), contains the following remarks with reference to this subject: "Medical students have, by their shortcomings, set their seal upon one generation of the profession. To them it is due, we think, that medical men, although marching, have not kept pace with the times; and that while advancing, they have retrograded relatively to the advance of other classes, such as the clergy and the legal profession. Quackery of all kinds is mainly due to professional errors, and although fashionable quackery may be due to errors arising out of the present state of science, or resulting necessarily from human infirmity, this is but a small portion of the whole."*

The author of "Physician and Patient," likewise remarks on this point: "The promotion of a thorough education of the medical profession would be found the most efficient means of exterminating quackery. The lower the standard of education of the medical profession, the greater will be the

* In another article, "Medical Gossip," the writer remarks, "Charlatanism is by no means confined to illegal practice. To see the fullest-fledged charlatanism we need not step beyond the bounds of the profession. The most refined quacks stalk under cover of a legal qualification. The register may perhaps be held *in terrorum* over the most arrant of them, but after all, the only check upon them must be in the tone adopted by the body of the profession."

number of pretenders who will gain admission into its ranks, and consequently the greater the prevalence of quackery in the profession, and of course in the community. This result is the more certain to follow, because deception and imposture are practised upon the public so much the more easily in medicine than in regard to other subjects; it is for this reason that it is for the interest of the community to have a proper standard of medical education maintained, much more even than it is for the interest of the profession itself, for so little are they qualified to judge on medical subjects, and so much are they obliged to take medical practice upon trust, that it is most important for them that they should have all the benefit of the safeguards which the requisites of our professional organisations throw around them." These observations are corroborated by the fact, to which I can testify from some experience, that in proportion as the medical organisation of a country is more efficient, and the medical practitioners are well-informed, the profession is held in higher estimation, and quackery has less hold upon the community.

Dr. Sharp's "Letter to Sir B. Brodie" having been so long delayed after repeated announcements, for its appearance at a defined period, will doubtless disappoint the expectations of many of its readers, especially as these expectations can scarcely fail to be further raised by the right of translation being reserved. It extends to upwards of one hundred and forty pages; but as far as a reply to the communication in "Fraser's Magazine" is con-

cerned, it might have been given in a quarter of the number, for the greater part consists of matter not very relevant to the point at issue, comprising an analysis of the author's previous work, remarks upon a new method, a new materia medica about to be published by him, the advantage of gold as a remedy, and of tetanium, the Medical Act, and Dr. Sharp's proceedings to prevent the attempted exclusion of homœopathists from the register. Dr. Sharp recommends a renewed study of his "Essays." My remarks upon them were written previous to perusing his letter, but for my part I have seen quite enough of them, and find nothing in his additional observations calculated to alter the opinion I entertain of their value.

I presume, in order to show his disinterested conviction of the superior advantages of homœopathy over the ordinary practice of medicine, Dr. Sharp says, "for the character of my previous position, I take the liberty to refer you to the town and neighbourhood where I formerly resided, and from which I retired, *because I had not health and strength to get through the work.*" I hope it may not be considered impertinent to inquire whether Dr. Sharp has not found his practice as a homœopathic physician to be more easy as well as more profitable, than it was as a hardworking general practitioner in a country town?

As might be expected, he takes up Sir Benjamin Brodie's avowal, "With all the pains I have been able to take, I have been unable to form any very distinct notion of the system;" and asks, "under

the circumstances that it was a subject you did not understand, how could you feel justified in writing more?" "Did it no strike you," he adds, "that the confidence of your readers must be shaken by this acknowledgment?"* He further says, "All those who have given homœopathy a fair and sufficient trial have been, on the whole, so well satisfied with its results, that they have adopted it as their future mode of practice." How is it, then, that so many homœopaths no longer adhere to the principles they professed, and are ready to treat patients allopathically or homœopathically, and that the above stated open renunciations should have occurred?†

* The homœopathists doubtless look upon Sir Benjamin Brodie's letter as a godsend, inasmuch as it has had the effect of again drawing public attention to a subject greatly on the wane. A French medical periodical (*Gazette Hebdomadaire*, Nov. 15th) thus adverts to this letter:—"We much fear that it will fail of producing its full effect. The converted will alone be of the opinion of the preacher, the sinners will laugh at it, the public will remain indifferent. Who knows, moreover, whether homœopathy will not find its account in this lecture, in which M. Brodie has thought fit to make before a public, for the most part extra-medical, certain confidences which should be made only *en famille*; for instance, that a great number of diseases are cured without the aid of art; that the homœopathists take advantage of (*exploitent*) the errors of regular practitioners in order to obtain greater credit for their success. We may see what a career is thus opened to malignity; we may likewise foresee what a deluge of replies will be called forth by this provocation. Leave time to do its work; it will soon finish wearing out this old threadbare cloak, of which they seek to conceal the holes with ill-assorted patches."

† Appended to the book is a long list (15 pages) of authors, who may be presumed to be the *elite* of homœopathic practitioners, and yet there is not, in as far as I know, a single name among them in anywise distinguished in a scientific or professional point of view.

Dr. Sharp strongly protests against homœopaths being classed with empirics, yet, by his own showing, the practice is essentially empirical. His new method is the "*doctrine of specifics*, to seek, and, when found, to use a specific remedy for the *malady*." Its principles are expressed in the two following propositions:—1. "All drugs given in health act partially, or select certain portions or organs of the body upon which their injurious action is produced. 2. Drugs are to be used as remedies for diseases of the same parts or organs as those upon which they act as poisons in health." And as respects the law for the dose:—"Different doses of the same drug given in health, select different organs on which to act injuriously. Corresponding but smaller doses of the same drug are to be given as remedies in the diseases of the organs which they select." "Oxalic acid, as a poison, acts in the largest doses upon the alimentary canal, in smaller ones upon the heart, in still smaller on the spinal cord, and in the smallest upon the brain." Consequently, "if for an affection of the brain, the dose must be the smallest which will produce any effect, if for one of the spine a somewhat larger dose will be required, if for a disease of the heart the dose is to be still further increased." Such is a brief exposition of Dr. Sharp's "new method," which professes to find a specific remedy for each disease without taking into account that the same disease often requires very different treatment, according to the peculiarities presented in individual cases; for it is in the

adaptation of the remedy to those peculiar circumstances, that the superior skill of one practitioner over another is manifested. According to this doctrine of specifics, given the disease and the remedy, no special knowledge of physiology, pathology, or therapeutics would be required. Rheumatism would be invariably treated by one and the same remedy, howsoever it might vary in symptoms and intensity. The smallest dose of oxalic acid, we are told, must be given for an *affection of the brain*; but there is a great variety of affections of the brain. Is oxalic acid, or any other substance that would act in large doses as a poison upon the brain, to be considered as the panacea adapted to all these cases? And so with respect to diseases of the spinal cord and the heart, which comprise a great number of affections, requiring in the estimation of ordinary practitioners various modes of treatment, and often a change of treatment in the same case.

After quoting Professors Christison and Orfila, to the effect that gold may act as a poison, Dr. Sharp observes—"Several modern physicians (homœopathic, it is to be presumed) have experimented with it upon themselves in divided doses of one or two grains (trituated). Among other symptoms which the experimenters experienced are enumerated, melancholy and depression of spirits, inflammation and caries of the bones, particularly the nasal, palatine, and facial bones." The hundredth part of a grain of gold was consequently administered by Dr. Sharp in a case of "extreme melancholy and despondency," arising from a chancery

suit. The patient was in a most distressing state. He wrote after this, "I feel better at once." Such is the case as stated ; no further details or results are given. The patient had, doubtless, an inkling that gold would be the most appropriate remedy in his case : it is a pity that it should not have been administered otherwise than homœopathically ; it would then, probably, have effectually relieved his "distressing state." Case 2—"Ozena of long standing, in which the constitution was greatly deranged and the osseus system affected ; the boy was permanently cured." Case 4—"Exostosis of the tibia ; a boy. The first trituration was given with benefit. *I believe a cure was effected ;* but as is often the case when that happens, the patient's friends did not think it worth while to communicate the intelligence directly to me."

Neither do patients frequently communicate unfavourable results of treatment, or return to a dispensary if they do not derive advantage from it.

Such is a sample of the cases adduced to prove the efficacy of a particular remedy. Can anything be more loose and vague ? and yet Dr. Sharp pretends that his observations are especially addressed to the profession. "My own judgment," he says, "has always been very decidedly against the propriety of appealing to the public."

With respect to the trial of homœopathy formerly made by M. Andral, Dr. Sharp says, "The whole republic of medicine have nothing to appeal to against us but these meagre and worthless experi-

ments." I have, however, shown that governments and medical bodies, as well as many individual members of the profession, both on the Continent and in Great Britain and America, after fairly testing by experiment, have wholly condemned the principles and the practice of homœopathy as unsound, detrimental, and unsafe.

Dr. Sharp must, I think, be mistaken in stating that "Andral himself subsequently condemned them, acknowledging that they were unavailing for the object proposed," for I have also shown how M. Andral expressed himself before the Academie de Medecine with reference to his experiments for testing homœopathy. On giving an abstract of those cases, Dr. Sharp likewise says that one dose only of the medicine named was given in each case, and "if the patient was not cured in a few days the result was reckoned a failure." These statements are, however, irreconcilable with those which were made at the time as to the open and fair manner in which the trials were conducted, strictly in accordance with acknowledged homœopathic principles, as also with the admission of Dr. Sharp that the trial was carried on for thirty-five weeks, the cases being thirty-five in number.

I have carefully read over Dr. Sharp's "Letter," from which I confess I expected something more conclusive, but I cannot perceive in it anything calling for further comment on my part beyond the points I have noted.

POSTSCRIPT.

EXTRACTS from "MEDICINE, SCIENTIFIC AND SCHISMATIC," in the "*Literary Gazette*," (November 16th, 23rd, and 30th).

WE see before us a science combating with the heaviest difficulties, groping its way in darkness for the most benevolent of objects, but torn up with disputations and crowded with schismatic foes. Beneath them (the mass of legitimate medicine) mounting no step at all, wishing indeed to make no advance, jabbering some obscure dogma, or pointing with ridicule to the proceedings enacting above them, stand the schismatics of physic in garbs, as various as all the national costumes of the earth, and with tongues and customs as incongruous. Placed nearest of all to the world, the world hears more of these last than any others—they will be heard; to them, *nolens volens*, the sick man shall listen; if it be but to rid himself of their importunities, he shall buy. They have a rule for every malady, a remedy for every accident, a cant dogmatical answer for every question. One of them for the sake of the lookers has a list of many cures; the next wear broad phylacteries, and on grounds of benevolence, gratitude, and piety, offers his wares; the third struts proudly by with a flag, the motto of which, *similia similibus curantur*, arrests by its profundity, and on explanation awes by its apparent simplicity.

This is the picture which medicine presents to the world; a sad picture, and one we would see removed were removal practicable.

We will ask what, scientifically, is the value of the schism, homœopathy? Why has it taken possession of so many members of the community? Is there in it as a method, any element leading to its success as a practice? Why does it so utterly fail to attract the attention of the scientific part of the medical world?

It is usually believed that the author of homœopathy is the man with the big bust, Hahnemann, who rendered himself notorious by assuming to produce in his own body nearly all the diseases that flesh is heir to. It is usually assumed that Hahnemann advanced originally the principle *similia similibus curantur*. Lastly, it is the common supposition that the followers of Hahnemann use always infinitesimal doses. We regret to say, that as honest journalists, we cannot altogether indorse these

historical sentiments. We do not accept in the first place that there is a tittle of trustworthy evidence that Hahnemann ever produced in his own person by scientific experiment, any single specific disease, or that having produced such disease he ever cured it according to the idea which he wished to demonstrate. We cannot even grant to Hahnemann the original idea of curing diseases by a given law; on the contrary, we think it would require no very profound literary research to shew that the idea was prepared pretty well ready to his hands. Once more, we can in no way accept that, in every given case subjected to their treatment, the homœopathists carry out the principles laid down by their author, that to increase the potency of a remedy, one must divide it, and that as a remedy becomes by increase of division more active, so it is logical and even necessary to divide to infinitesimals. We cannot accept the continuance of this principle, because we know that it is not carried out by the homœopathic fraternity with any attempted system. We are sufficiently conversant with their practices, and we may add with their humanity, to be assured that in a majority of instances of an important kind, they throw the infinitesimals to the winds.

What, scientifically, is the value of the schism homœopathy? It is not for us to consider whether homœopathy contrasted favourably with other practices imperfect in character, but whether the principle from which it derives its name has in it any foundation; whether, in a word, the idea of curing certain symptoms by the use of remedies that would produce similar symptoms, can be accepted as a law of nature. On this point we may remark as to preliminary facts, that the principle laid down is in its very terms contrary to the strict language of science and philosophy: that it is not the enunciation of a discovered principle in nature, acting entirely by nature, but that it is a mere dogma respecting certain interferences which a dogmatist thinks he can introduce as against nature; nothing less, and nothing more. He is the true philosopher in medicine who simply expounds the laws by which life is governed, while he who goes farther than this, or rather apart from this, and says virtually, "I care nothing for the natural law, I seek only to remedy by my dogma a broken law," proclaims himself at once impostor, an enthusiast perchance, and at heart a well meaning man, but an impostor nevertheless, and one who is playing fantastic tricks before high heaven.

That the followers of Hahnemann have themselves acted on the principles we have described, cannot be better illustrated than by the proceedings which they have systematically adopted; for, evidently conscious that they must be in opposition, and put up one dogma against another, they have unscrupulously and falsely advanced for the public ear, that their particular dogma

is a set-off against an opposite dogma, known as *contraria contrariis curantur*, by which all the body medical, except themselves, treat diseases. This statement is of course a flat deception; and the nickname allopathy, by which they have endeavoured to symbolize the deception, a rank deceit. For although it is true that some of the earlier writers in medicine argued obscurely on the merits of curing diseases by the use of contraries, yet at no time in the history of medicine has there been any sect that has practised on this dogma, nor any medical man who has seriously conducted his practice on the principle involved in it, nor allowed it seriously to enter his thoughts as a ruling principle in treatment. When a medical man gives bark for ague, he does it as a matter of experience, apart from dogma. When he gives opium to procure sleep, or relieve pain, it is not because opium is opposed to wakefulness or pain, but because he knows from experience that the drug will procure the sleep and relieve the pain. The truth is then, that, as a matter of philosophical argument, no dogma in medical science can be accepted as explicitly representing that science in its universality. It obtains, and it is most natural it should obtain, that as diseased conditions are looked into more deeply, as chemistry advances and is applied to medicine, as physiology advances and is applied to medicine, as even meteorology advances and is applied to medicine, so the ideas of the scientific part of the medical world undergo a gradual but remote series of changes, in respect to the diseases which afflict humanity. If we in these days were to ask any acute homœopath—say even Dr. Sharp, what he meant by apoplexy, we are much mistaken if he would dare, in the presence of current knowledge, to speak either of it or of its symptoms after the manner of his master. He would say, if he spoke the truth, and wished to stand well before the “Great White Throne” on which he has dilated so eloquently, those old writers confounded under one name, a variety of differing diseases, or at all events of diseased conditions, arising from entirely different causes. It is amply sufficient for our purpose to indicate that the homœopath never has had, and has not such a perfect definition of disease at his command as shall lead him to say, “I can cure this disease by imitating it,” or to assert that he can in any way imitate a disease primitively, even by inducing its most prominent symptoms, inasmuch as the most prominent symptom may be but an incidental fact, however important. Thus, there is a disease called *diabetes mellitus*, the most marked symptom of which consists in the elimination of grape sugar from the body; the disease takes its name from this symptom, but the name is a misnomer, for the disease actually lies in the nervous centres, and can be induced by injuries to these parts,

its leading external symptoms being a third or a fourth removed from the essence of the disease itself. How, then, can any formula be adopted for the treatment of this disease on its mere name, and on the exhibition of its external symptoms ?

The practice of medicine reduced to this simplicity would, indeed, be reduced to a very simple standard, but unfortunately such reduction would render it a mere absurdity, a fact which the more intelligent homœopaths fully appreciate. Thus, Dr. Sharp teaches, in speaking of what he calls the "single medicine," that the value of homœopathy consists in the circumstance that, upon the new plan of treatment, all healthy parts are left undisturbed, and a single remedy is given having a specific action upon the ailing part. Here, then, is implied not merely a knowledge of symptoms, but an actual comprehension of the seat and course of every symptom represented in a given disorder ; a point of knowledge which, we conscientiously assert, has not been attained as yet in respect to any disease or symptom whatever.

Further, it is admitted, honestly, by the real scientific investigators of the synthesis of disease, that these important investigations do not, as yet, suggest for any one of the diseases investigated, a specific cure. Their labours are in the highest degree suggestive of the direction on which treatment should move, and of the conditions in which the sufferer should be placed, in order that he may be in favourable circumstances for recovery, and as time wears on, and further light is admitted, these directions may arrange themselves in a definite and specific form, but this has yet all to be realised. Least of all, from these synthetical inquiries, has any proof been given that by modifying the synthesis, after disease has been induced, a cure is effected on the principle *similia similibus curantur* ? On the contrary, the facts are indisputable, that whatever symptoms of disease have been induced by the experimental method, their extinction has occurred just in proportion as the cause producing them has been removed ; a sequence which the least scientific mind would naturally expect and follow.

If *similia similibus curantur* is a principle of general application, it admits of rigid and ready proof ; such proof has never yet been given ; such proof can never be given until disease, in its primitive sense, is traced out with absolute precision. When such precision is attained, then will be the time for talking about a law, applicable to cure, in the specific sense of that word.

If the great dogma of the homœopathic schismatics is destitute of any scientific value as a principle, it is even more so as a practice, for it happens, unfortunately, for those who pretend

to cure by the dogma of similars curing similars, that they have arrived as yet, at no perfection, and at but little unanimity as to the mode in which the cure should be devised, and the amount in which the curative remedy should be supplied. The scientific practitioner of medicine having selected a remedy for employment in any particular form of disease, makes it a rule to prescribe the remedy in a dose which experience tells him will produce the particular effect for which the prescription is intended. It may be contended that great uncertainty prevails as to intention in the administration of drugs; and this argument is not to be altogether ignored, at the same time it must be remembered that, with all the apparent informality, an immense amount of useful work is performed, and that were it not for a knowledge, however crude, of the administration of medicines to meet emergencies, the art and science of medicine were worth nothing whatever in public estimation.

The professors of homœopathy, not content with the bare application of their dogma, contend, of all things, most vehemently against the common-sense principle in the prescribing of medicinal substances named above.

Assuming that they have a rule for the selection of remedies, assuming the preposterous idea that in every disease they can descend upon the local origin of the disease, and basing on these assumptions that they can select a remedy which shall go direct to the affected part, leaving all the rest of the organism untouched by its influence; assuming all this, these dogmatists take high ground, and ride out their peremptoriness on a sort of high-horse logic, to an extent which is peculiarly terrible to the uninitiated. But, unhappily for them, when they have arrived so far, their line of continuity is unbroken, they may decide on the remedy, but they cannot decide on the dose. Suppose one of them to prescribe a dose so large that the affected organ could not accommodate the dose; or, suppose he prescribed so small a dose, that in its many wanderings from the cup to the lip, and from the lip through the various mazes of the alimentary track, lacteal vessel, and blood current, the dose should never reach the organ at all. What a dire disaster! Or, again, premise that the organ, locally diseased, be but slightly diseased, on the one hand, or disorganised by disease on the other, what in these cases, respectively, shall be the law?

To all these important queries, we are instructed to answer, that as yet the homœopathists have agreed only on a single point, namely—we follow the words of Dr. Sharp—that the dose must be *small*. The intelligent reader will naturally ask,

“On what grounds has this remarkable decision been arrived at?” Ostensibly the reason is, that inasmuch as the homœopath possesses the marvellous acuteness to go back, in every disease, to that one local spot in which all the mischief originates, and has the further skill of directing every remedy he may use immediately to that spot, and to no other part of the economy; so, owing to the limitation of surface over which the said remedy exerts its influence, the quantity of the remedy must necessarily be small. The argument looks pretty, but examined closely, is equally fallacious, even on its own basis of reasoning, as any that have preceded it; for on these grounds not only must the quantity of the dose prescribed be determined, but the periods of administrations, and the number of administrations, inasmuch as the mere matter of quantity is, in the end, determined, not by the amount taken at once, but by the amount taken altogether. But, in truth, the inference on which the small dose is presumed to be made, is a mere after thought, and a convenient explanation of what would be, even to the uneducated, a ridiculous statement. At the present day, no two homœopaths agree on the question; some use one dilution, some another; and, as in the same case, one homœopath would give as much as a grain of an active substance, and another the decillionth of a grain; so the absurdity of the principle fully exposes itself, and requires, in sober truth, no further exposition.

Scientifically the homœopathic creed has no foundation whatever; and however much we and others may deplore the shortcomings of truly scientific medicine, we are only supporting a fallacy on the one hand, and obstructing a valuable science on the other, in allowing ourselves to permit homœopathy to take any place as a branch of learning and practice.

Why has this medical schism taken possession of so many members of the community? The answer to this query is easy. In the first place, the position that has been assumed by Hahnemann and his followers is one which has always been more or less successful for a time in captivating public sentiment; in plain words, they have formed themselves into a volunteer corps of martyrs. In his earliest days, Hahnemann was received with becoming attention; and even his first paper, involving the risk of the assertion of a dogma, was allowed place in perhaps the most scientific journal of the day (Hufeland's). For this he met with no persecution, but soon afterwards he commenced to vaunt a new remedy for scarlet fever, which remedy he kept secret till 1801. It is not customary for a learned profession to bear calmly with a man who pretends to secret cures; but, nevertheless, this mistake was looked on with consideration

and forgiveness.* (After noting the various dilutions of opium and belladonna recommended by Hahnemann in scarlet fever, the writer concludes.) Lastly, for meeting the symptoms that supervene after scarlet fever, he recommended again the use of belladonna or of chamomilla in doses of $\frac{1}{100000}$ of a grain.

It could scarcely be expected in human nature that such violations of opinions, usually received, could be accepted without opposition; it is no less true that this paper was accepted with candour and good feeling. Our own English Medical Journal, in quoting the paper, commented on the views enunciated with the utmost courtesy. But the fact was, that Hahnemann himself, not content with announcing his discoveries, tried to thrust them on the profession with a vehemence, and, we may say, with a vulgarity which could have but one result—a persecution, which we believe he courted rather than opposed, and which he and his followers have built upon ever since as a successful means of acquiring notoriety and ignorant sympathy. After this, the love of the marvellous and the love of novelty, have effected not a little in supporting the schism, while the change which the professors of the novelty have adopted, namely—of administering tasteless globules and tinctures for nauseous draughts, and the calls which they have made on the imagination, have ensured for them a certain degree of popularity, which, however puerile, must be considered as remarkably effective. There remains one other reason for the partial success of homœopathy with the people, and it is this—that when carried out in all its innocuousness, a large number of diseases, under its apparent medication, have got well. Sir Kenelm Digby cured wounds quicker than the surgeons, by plastering the weapon that made the wound with sympathetic salve, and leaving the wound to nature. And so with our homœopaths, by letting the disease alone, that is to say, by giving infinitesimal nothings, they have been more than usually clever in seeing the body move back from the unnatural to the natural state of its own volition. If we take disease altogether as devisible into two hundred and six groups, we find not less than from seventy to seventy-five in which the causes that produce them are temporary, and which, under any

* Hufeland, whose name is wrongly given in the list of writers in favour of homœopathy, appended to Dr. Sharp's work, said, respecting it, when it first came into notice, "This doctrine will necessarily serve to demonstrate the remedial powers of nature." Some years afterwards M. Ratier remarked in the 'Encyclopedie des Gens du Monde,' vol. iv., "Homœopathy is based upon hypothetical facts, and upon forced inductions. Clinical examination has not confirmed the promises which the homœopaths made of its success in bad cases, with an assurance difficult to be conceived, especially by men who know the difficulties of the art and the limits of its power."

variety of treatment that is not hurtful, recover, as a general rule. The truly scientific physician, knowing all this, obeys the law, and neither quacks with globules nor taxes with potions, but guarding his patient, as far as possible, from unnecessary danger, and directing the organism as far as he can towards a natural termination of the disease, he performs one of the highest functions incidental to humanity, in that he removes from the sufferer, by the diversity of knowledge, those agencies which human ignorance have placed between the perfect law, and that which should be the perfect man.

The two remaining questions require but little observation. Is there in homœopathy any element leading to its success as a practice? The answer to this question has been given already. We have seen that when the practice appears to succeed, the success is fortuitous, and that, therefore, as a practice for the administration of drugs, on a given system, it is a mere pretence.

Why, lastly, does homœopathy so utterly fail to attract the attention of the scientific part of the medical world? The reason for this is plainly intelligible. Men of true science believe only in realities, and men truly scientific in medicine, feel more than any other the necessity for these realities. They look around and are pained to observe, that with all their labours, their progress is slow and difficult; they never seek to hide this fact, but openly proclaim it, and admit that, indebted greatly to sciences which are collateral, they are bound to wait for the advance of their neighbours, and to apply these advances to their own particular studies. Of all things, again, knowing as they do, how entirely the production of disease depends on external causes, they shrink from your inventor of specifics, and your propounder of dogmas, with instinctive dread. Casting together *similia similibus curantur*, and *contraria contrariis curantur*, into the same limbo designed for the reception of human conceits and ignorances, they toil on as we depicted them at first, looking timidly at the ascent, carving the slippery steps, and longing for the prospect that awaits them at the summit—the simple mystery of life at their feet, a newly discovered world, which opens all and explains all.

The series of papers from which the above copious extracts are taken, are the more valuable from being the production of a non-professional, and consequently, unbiassed writer, who shows himself to be perfectly acquainted with all the bearings of the question.

POSTSCRIPT.

EXTRACT from the "GAZETTE MEDICALE" (December 7th),
referring to the letter of Sir B. Brodie.

"Our London *confrères* see only two things in this letter, the absurdity of homœopathy, and the reprobation of any serious physician who should be so weak as to temporise with the great abomination. They imagine that extra-professional persons, people of the world, will likewise see nothing else in it. The *British Medical Journal* expresses itself on the subject in the following terms :—'If our patients ask us what we think of homœopathy, which would draw us into long, useless, and often painful discussions, we need in future only present to them, as an answer, the letter of Sir B. Brodie. Such we would say is the opinion of the celebrated professor ; it is also our own.'

"Each country is more or less acquainted with its own temperament, and possesses remedies which respond to its idiosyncrasies. Let us hope that this letter will produce upon the homœopaths the effect of certain insecticide powders. But if we may judge of the English public spirit from that of France, the remedy would appear to us to be worse than the disease."



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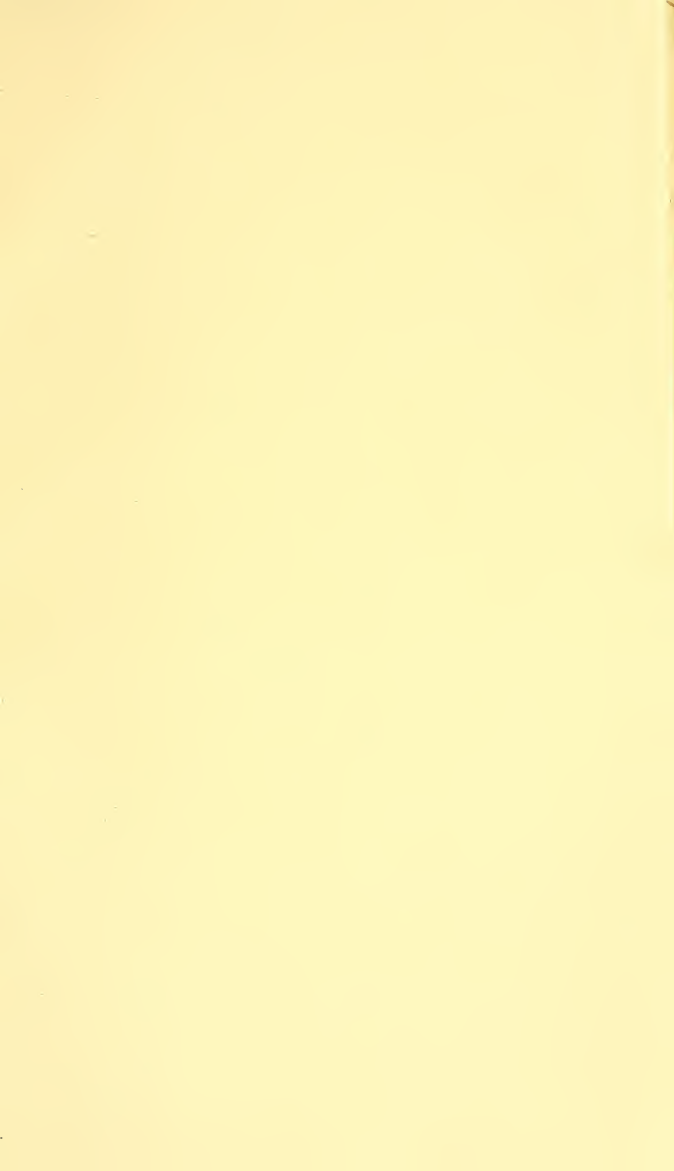
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